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MAIN STORIES
**IN DEFENSE
OF THE
PRESIDENT**

p.5

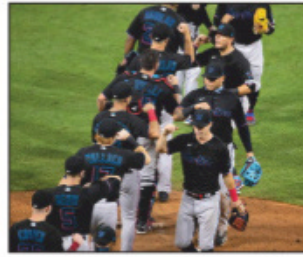
William
Barr



TALKING POINTS

An outbreak
endangers
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PEOPLE

Why Diaz
gave up
acting

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THE WEEK

THE BEST OF THE U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

Sound and fury

Were federal agents sent to Portland
to quell violence
or to incite it?

p.4



AUGUST 7, 2020 VOLUME 20 ISSUE 987

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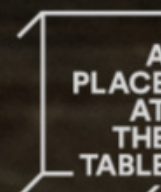
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Editor's letter

For a moment, I forgot. Karla and I were at an outdoor restaurant on a summer evening, surrounded by tables of chattering families and relaxed couples. In the waning yellow sunlight, we sipped wine, enjoyed our halibut, and soaked up the life around us. Giddy liberation was in the air. The entire main street of this small suburban town north of New York City had been closed to cars, so that restaurants, a pizza place, and an ice cream joint could set up distanced tables outside. People wore masks on sidewalks and while making their way to their tables, taking them off when they were seated. Similar successful adaptations to the pandemic can be found throughout the Northeast, where the test-positivity rate has fallen to about 1 percent and deaths and hospitalizations have plunged. The coronavirus is a formidable foe, but we now know how to minimize its person-to-person spread. How many people get sick and die between now and a vaccine is largely under our control.

"We can virtually eliminate the virus any time we decide to," says Andy Slavitt, a former head of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Several other countries in Asia and Europe have largely done so. To undo the damage of premature reopenings in the South and West, Slavitt says, these states would need a second lockdown, closing all bars, indoor restaurants, churches, and public transit for about 50 days. Masks should be mandated, and interstate travel shut down. These policies, Slavitt calculates, would drive the reproduction rate of Covid-19 down to 0.5. Then exponential pandemic math would take over, and a community with 60,000 active cases would, 50 days later, have just 58 cases. At that point, testing and contact tracing become fast and effective. Life could safely resume, with some prudent restrictions. The alternative is now on display in ICUs in Florida, Arizona, and Texas. Will successive surges define our lives into 2021? Our choice.

William Falk
Editor-in-chief

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THE WEEK

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Portland protesters and agents in violent clashes

What happened

After a week of escalating confrontations between protesters and federal agents outside a federal courthouse in Portland, Ore., Gov. Kate Brown said this week that the Department of Homeland Security has agreed to a phased withdrawal of its officers. Acting DHS Secretary Chad Wolf cautioned, however, that any pullback was contingent on “significant” improvement in the security situation in the city, where protesters’ numbers have swelled over the past week in opposition to the federal presence. His point was underlined by President Trump, who said he was ready to send up to 75,000 federal agents into Democratic-led cities he painted as bastions of lawlessness. “We’re not leaving until they’ve secured their city,” he said of Portland. “If they don’t...we’re going to have to go in and clean it out.” While thousands of Black Lives Matter demonstrators have gathered peacefully in Portland by day, at night the scene at the courthouse has grown tense and violent, with activists throwing rocks and cans, launching fireworks, and setting fires while agents emerge to fire tear gas, stun grenades, and rubber bullets. Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler, who was tear-gassed when he joined the demonstrators, called the agents in riot gear “an occupying force” and blamed them for intensifying the protests.

Demonstrations spurred by the Portland standoff spread across the U.S. over the weekend, with police and protesters clashing in Los Angeles; Chicago; Richmond, Va.; and Aurora, Colo. In Seattle, police used pepper spray and flash grenades to clear some 2,000 protesters galvanized by the presence of federal agents sent into the city to quell anticipated violence. Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan—one of six mayors who called on Congress on Monday to bar the use of federal troops in cities that haven’t requested them—called the use of “paramilitary-type forces” in U.S. cities “textbook despotism.”

What the editorials said

Trump’s incursion into Portland is an act of “stunning overreach,” said *The Seattle Times*. Protecting the federal courthouse “is defensible,” but sending agents “into city streets to use brutal tactics veers into dystopian governance.” The Department of Homeland Security “has no role using force within an American city” where it’s not wanted. This militarized intervention is a “blatant political



Nightly battles: Federal agents outside the courthouse

power play,” said *The Boston Globe*. To boost his troubled re-election bid, Trump is trying to “tap the same fearmongering and racialized appeal” that helped get him elected in 2016.

If Democratic mayors don’t like what’s happening in Portland, they should “get off their duffs and start governing,” said *WashingtonExaminer.com*. The so-called peaceful protesters have inflicted millions in property damage, set the police union headquarters on fire, laid siege to a courthouse, and fired on law officers with slingshots and air rifles. If ineffectual local officials desperate “to placate the anti-police mob” won’t crack down on these “anarchist rioters,” someone else must.

What the columnists said

For Trump, Portland has been a “roaring success,” said David Graham in *TheAtlantic.com*. Needing a distraction from his “disastrous” pandemic performance, Trump “barely concealed” his goal: Send federal forces into unwilling Democratic cities, wait for images of conflict, “and then use it as both retroactive justification and political leverage” for his re-election campaign. The “tit-for-tat violence” that’s escalated over the past week would represent a dismal failure if the goal was to quell unrest, “but it never was.” Trump aimed to stoke it.

The “storm trooper” comparisons are absurd, said Rich Lowry in *NationalReview.com*. The federal deployment in Portland is “plainly legal, justified, and proportionate.” The agents’ right to protect federal property from a violent mob is unquestionable. The off-site arrests seized on by hyperventilating critics as “rogue” abductions were prudent police work; to “wade into a crowd” to arrest a lawbreaker is to invite danger.

This is “Authoritarianism 101,” said Trudy Rubin in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. “Despots stoke violence and civil strife to scare their people into supporting leaders who would ‘protect’ them.” When faced with peaceful protests, they “provoke chaos, as an excuse to unleash their own violence.” I’ve seen this “strongman’s playbook” in operation around the globe, from Syria and Egypt to Russia and Hong Kong. But I never expected to see it unfold in America.

It wasn’t all bad

■ A bravura impromptu piano performance of Journey’s “Don’t Stop Believin’” got John Thomas Archer a rapt audience and a free piano. Archer, 23, sat down to play at a piano for sale at ReMARKable Cleanouts in Norwood, Mass.; an employee recorded his performance and later showed it to the store owner, Mark Waters. “He just lit up and drew a crowd,” Waters said. Waters was so inspired that he tracked Archer down on social media to give him the piano. “He went into tears and it brought tears to my eyes,” Waters said.

■ An original “Rosie the Riveter” who helped save the country building warplanes during World War II is now making masks to fight the deadly coronavirus. Mae Krier, 94, was employed by Boeing in the 1940s to assemble B-17 and B-29 bombers alongside other women. These women who would tie their hair back into a bandanna were depicted in the famous WWII-era poster of Rosie the Riveter flexing her arm, with the slogan “We can do it!” Krier has made 200 masks using that same red polka-dot design worn by Rosie. “If just one of these little face masks can save one life,” Krier said, “I’ve done my job.”



Krier: Still helping her country

Note to readers

Due to a production error in our previous issue, the Best U.S. Columns page was repeated on pages 12 and 14. Since the People page was omitted, most of the stories from that page are running in this edition, on page 10.

Barr battles Democrats in Capitol Hill defense

What happened

Attorney General William Barr repeatedly denied accusations that he had politicized the Justice Department during a fiery back-and-forth this week with Democrats on the House Judiciary Committee. During a bitter hearing that frequently descended into shouting, the attorney general defended his decision to overrule career prosecutors' recommendation of a seven- to nine-year prison sentence for President Trump's friend and former adviser Roger Stone. Barr said the sentence would have been "more than twice what anyone else in a similar position had ever served." He also denied President Trump had ever tried to influence criminal justice decisions, including Barr's move to have former national security adviser Michael Flynn's guilty plea to lying to the FBI vacated. Rep. Hank Johnson (D-Ga.) asked, "You are expecting the American people to believe that you did not do what Trump wanted you to do?"

Barr denied sending federal forces to Portland, Ore., to provide footage of conflict and violence now being used in Trump campaign ads, saying, "Rioters and anarchists have hijacked legitimate protests." Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.) questioned why he'd sent these units to Portland while ignoring earlier armed right-wing demonstrations in Michigan. "Are you aware that these protesters called for the governor to be lynched, shot, and beheaded?" asked Jayapal. Barr also revealed that U.S. attorney John Durham, whom he appointed to conduct a criminal probe of the Russia investigation, hopes to conclude his work soon; Barr said he would not rule out releasing Durham's findings close to the November election.



Barr: Protesters are 'rioters and anarchists.'

What the columnists said

Democrats finally got a go at Barr and "they blew it," said **Jeremy Stahl** in *Slate.com*. Meeting Barr's demand that lawmakers question him without the help of staff attorneys, Democrats "largely flailed in efforts" to hold him to account. He dodged questions about why the DOJ has "stopped investigating patterns and practices of discrimination" in local police departments and never explained his gross misrepresentation of special counsel Robert Mueller's findings on Russian election interference.

Barr's appearance was yet "another Dem disaster," said **Michael Goodwin** in *NYPost.com*. The party spent weeks planning "a public hanging" and instead the attorney general "ate their lunch." He gave forceful answers and countered chairman Rep. Jerrold Nadler's (D-N.Y.) "farrago of lies" with a clear-eyed portrayal of the leftist terrorists who are ransacking Portland. That's what happens when the Left is confronted with a man who is unafraid that the "truth will get him canceled."

Indeed, Barr has contempt for the elected lawmakers, because he answers only to Trump and his Twitter account, said **Dana Milbank** in *The Washington Post*. He derided protesters as a mob, "dismissed the idea that there is systemic racism in policing," though "black men are 2.5 times more likely to be killed by police," and tried to pin violence on protesters. We've seen this strategy before, when Trump summoned up fears of an "invasion" by migrant caravans in 2018. Back then, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis wouldn't follow Trump's script. Now, in Barr, Trump has found a Cabinet official eager to help out.

Vaccine trials begin as Covid deaths climb

What happened

Large-scale clinical trials of two potential Covid-19 vaccines began in the U.S. this week, raising hopes for a medical solution to a disease that has infected more than 4.5 million Americans and killed at least 153,000. Nearly 1,300 Americans died of Covid-19 on Tuesday, the biggest one-day spike since May, with California, Oregon, Montana, Arkansas, Texas, and Florida reporting record single-day fatalities. Infections appeared to be peaking across the Sun Belt but surging in the Midwest. Dr. Deborah Birx, coordinator of the White House coronavirus task force, urged hard-hit states to require masks and to shut down bars. "That's not a plan for us," said Tennessee's Republican Gov. Bill Lee.

Results from the Phase III trial of the vaccine developed by Massachusetts-based biotech firm Moderna could arrive as early as November, said Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious-disease expert. That trial and another launched by pharma giant Pfizer will each involve some 30,000 volunteers across the U.S.; half will receive the vaccine and half a placebo. Meanwhile, in Washington, D.C., national security adviser Robert O'Brien tested positive for Covid-19, as did Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-Texas), who refused to wear a mask on Capitol Hill. President Trump declared much of the U.S. "corona-free" at a press conference and touted a group of doctors who claim, without evidence, that the anti-malarial hydroxychloroquine can cure Covid-19. "They're very respected doctors," Trump said of the group, one of whom has stated that many diseases are caused by sex with demons.

What the columnists said

It's "no secret" why New York flattened the curve "while Sun Belt states have been flattened by it," said **Max Boot** in *Washington Post.com*. Devastated by nearly 30,000 deaths, New Yorkers treat coronavirus "as a merciless foe worthy of respect." Restaurants remain closed for indoor dining, movie theaters and gyms are shuttered, and mask wearing is ubiquitous. That's why New York registered only 605 cases one day this week, while Florida—which chose to reopen early and ignore our painful lessons—had 9,344.

New York's endless lockdown is nothing to admire, said **Jim Geraghty** in *NationalReview.com*. Many states are avoiding "difficult decisions" by telling citizens to hold out "until there's a vaccine." But what will happen if scientists "hit roadblocks" and a working vaccine isn't available until 2022 or 2023? At that point, we'd have no choice but to figure out how to live with this virus, by making workplaces as safe as possible and reinventing schooling. Our leaders should "hope for the best and prepare for the worst."

"The good news," said **Sarah Zhang** in *TheAtlantic.com*, "is that experts think there will be a Covid-19 vaccine." But when that breakthrough finally comes, manufacturers will have to produce hundreds of millions of doses, and the government will have to distribute and allocate them. It's easy to envision "a demoralizing scenario where vaccines are available, but there is no way" to deliver them. An approved vaccine would be a major step toward containment, but still "only the beginning of the end."

Homeschooling: Are 'pandemic pods' unethical?

As school districts give uncertain signals about the fall, anxious parents “are taking matters into their own hands,” said **Patrick Hauf** in *Spectator.us*. Homeschooling was once limited largely to evangelical Christians and off-the-grid hippies, but many mainstream parents are starting to see it as a better choice than having their children educated remotely, via ineffective online Zoom classes, or sending them into public schools that could be hotbeds of coronavirus. Parents also have to work, of course. So many families are organizing “pandemic pods” of between five and 10 children each, where the parents either take turns teaching lessons or pool their resources to hire a full-time tutor. “There are obvious benefits to podding,” said **Juliana Kaplan** in *BusinessInsider.com*. Children get the “socialization” benefits of mingling with peers, while families minimize their risk of infection. But critics say pods will only “widen the already deep chasm of educational inequities” in America, as mostly white, upper-middle-class families use their money to hire the best teachers while further draining students and resources from a public school system the pandemic has already brought to its knees.

Pandemic pods may be new, said **Valerie Strauss** in *The Washington Post*, but they’re just another form of “white flight” from public education. Pods will have a disastrous impact on minority students, even if organized by well-meaning liberals who only weeks ago put up “Black Lives Matter” signs in their yards and windows. Parents are naturally going to team up with “people they know and trust,” said **Clara Totenberg Green** in *The New York Times*. This “rational impulse” will lead affluent white families to pod together, and



A family homeschooling in Brockton, Mass.

exclude many black and Latino families. The result will be a society that’s more stratified and more deeply riven by “racial inequities rooted in white supremacy.”

Spare us “the triple helping of guilt,” said **Matt Welch** in *Reason.com*. Parents aren’t starting pods “to separate their children from people who don’t look like them.” They’re starting pods because there’s no guarantee that schools will reopen, and because “they would rather eat razor blades” than spend another school year trying to do their jobs in a home full of bored,

restless, noisy children. If progressives are scared that pods will widen inequality, said **Bethany Mandel** in *WashingtonExaminer.com*, maybe they should reconsider their long-standing opposition to so-called voucher systems. Why not give education funds to all families directly, and “allow that money to follow those children to pods, tutors,” or private schools that choose to open?

That might be a long-term solution, said **Josh Greenman** in the New York *Daily News*. But with the coming school year just weeks away, all parents are going to do what’s in their children’s best interests, and some parents simply “have more resources to advance those interests than others.” Wealthy parents should channel their well-founded guilt into finding “new ways to give low-income families access to the same alternative.” Pods are “a short-term solution for a lucky few,” said **Helaine Olen** in *The Washington Post*. In the long term, though, the fragmentation of our schooling system is going to “worsen the plight of everyone.” Any society that forces parents to figure out schooling on their own “is a failing one.”

Only in America

■ The owners of The Nordic Pineapple Bed and Breakfast in St. Johns, Mich., have taken down their Norwegian flag after residents accused them of racism. Kjersten Offenbecker, who has Norwegian heritage, concedes that Norway’s flag shares a color palette with the Confederate battle flag, but says the two flags are clearly distinct. “It bugs me as far as the stupidity of people,” says her husband, Greg. “There are no stars on it.”

■ The Republican National Committee spent \$14,000 on face masks in June, but listed it in campaign-finance filings as “building maintenance.” The wording may reflect conservative resistance to mask wearing. Former Republican FEC chairman Bradley Smith called the description “entirely appropriate,” saying that masks “are a safety measure akin to repairing emergency exits.”

Good week for:

The way we were, with the announcement that former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson, 54, will fight former heavyweight champion Roy Jones Jr., 51, in a September pay-per-view exhibition match. Just because they’re over 50, Tyson said, “doesn’t mean our lives are totally over.”

Adaptation, after a strip club in Houston reinvented itself as a drive-through service. Socially distanced dancers at the Vivid Gentlemen’s Club perform on a tented stretch of sidewalk behind metal barriers, and customers are asked to drive on after only two songs.

Getting that puppy, after new research found that children ages 2 to 5 are 40 percent less likely to have social-interaction problems with other children if raised in a home with a family dog.

Bad week for:

Curveballs, after President Trump became jealous when health official Anthony Fauci threw out a first pitch at a baseball game, and told reporters that he would do the same at Yankee Stadium, which came as news to the Yankees. Trump later tweeted that he canceled his first pitch “because of my strong focus on the China Virus.”

Sizeism, after Venice formally lowered from six to five the passenger limit on the city’s iconic gondolas, because of the increasing weight of the average tourist. “Going forward with over half a ton of meat on board is dangerous,” said gondolier Raoul Roveratto.

David Hines, a Florida businessman accused of receiving \$4 million in loans from the Paycheck Protection Program and using it for personal expenses, including buying a \$318,000 Lamborghini. “David is anxious to tell his side of the story,” said his lawyer.

Defense bill scraps Confederate names and symbols

The Senate passed a \$741 billion defense-spending measure last week, by a veto-proof 86-14 margin, that would remove any Confederate names or symbols from military property within three years. The vote came just days after the Democratic-controlled House passed its own version of the annual National Defense Authorization Act, which would also require the renaming of Army bases. President Trump had vowed to veto the legislation, calling it an attempt to scrub U.S. history; despite threats to veto it over policy issues, presidents have always signed the annual defense-spending bill. In hailing the vote, Sen. Tim Kaine (D.-Va.) said the U.S. cannot be serious about efforts at racial justice if it “continues to honor those who tried to destroy our country to save slavery.”

Simi Valley, Calif.

Name withheld: The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute demanded last week that President Trump's re-election campaign stop using Reagan's name and likeness to solicit funds. The Republican National Committee had sent a letter to potential donors offering a "limited edition" set of gold-colored commemorative coins with both presidents' images to anyone who donated \$45 or more to the Trump campaign. The foundation holds exclusive rights to Reagan's image. Though the RNC agreed to comply, it said the foundation's request "came as a surprise," since the Trump family has raised funds for the organization. Trump lashed out at the foundation on Twitter, claiming that "*The Washington Post* is running the Reagan Foundation." The newspaper's CEO and publisher, Frederick Ryan Jr., is also the group's chairman. RNC chair Ronna McDaniel also took aim at the foundation, asking if it would return the money that Donald Trump Jr. raised for it last year.

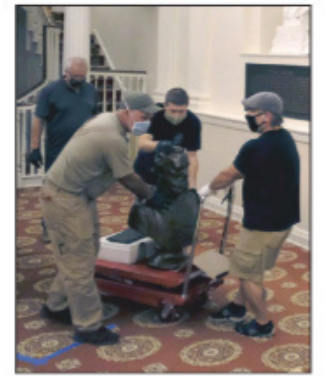
GOP icon

Minneapolis

Armed patrols: Gut-toting civilians formed neighborhood watches in areas of the city this week as crime surged in the wake of George Floyd's death at the hands of a police officer. In at least one place, near the abandoned, burnt-out 3rd Precinct station, residents made a de facto checkpoint out of an overturned boat on a trailer before replacing it with a permanent iron gate. "It got to the point where crime had no consequences," said Tania Rivera, who described a toxic outdoor environment of drug dealing, prostitution, gunplay, and public sex. "Everything you didn't want your neighborhood to look like," she said. Now an armed patrol is kicking out strangers after dark. The cops have green-lighted the patrols—and even the gate, so long as emergency vehicles can enter. Meanwhile, the City Council slashed police spending by \$10 million and shifted \$1 million to an anti-violence program focusing on community engagement.

Richmond, Va.

Removed: Democratic Speaker of the House of Delegates Eileen Filler-Corn executed a secret operation last week to remove eight statues of Confederate leaders from the capitol under cover of darkness. Beginning just before 9 p.m., workers wielding power tools removed the statues from the Old House Chamber, where the state's delegates convened until 1904 but which today is used as a museum. They started with Gens. Fitzhugh Lee and J.E.B. Stuart and ended around dawn with a 900-pound bronze of Gen. Robert E. Lee that stood where he accepted command of Virginia's military in 1861. Del. Lamont Bagby, a Democrat and head of the Black Caucus, hailed the move to rid the state-house of "imposing symbols of treason and white supremacy." Defenders of the monuments called it "arrogant," and Republican Del. Todd Gilbert asked whether Filler-Corn planned to raze the building itself, since it had once served as the Confederate capitol.



Stealth operation

Selma, Ala.

Final crossing: The body of Rep. John Lewis was brought this week by horse-drawn caisson to the center of the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, on which he led 600 protesters during the Bloody Sunday march 55 years ago. There, the 17-term Georgia representative, who died at the age of 80 on July 17, was transferred to a hearse and taken to Montgomery to lie in state, before moving on to Atlanta and then the U.S. Capitol.



Passage over the river

Seventy-seven people were hospitalized during the March 7, 1965, march when mounted state police and deputized civilians attacked Lewis' procession after the marchers refused to disperse. Lewis suffered a fractured skull when a policeman beat him with a club. Within months, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act amid national revulsion over the brutal assault on the march. President Trump, who sparred with Lewis, skipped the Capitol viewing, saying, "No, I won't be going, no."

AP ©

Georgia

Anti-Semitic caricature: Sen. David Perdue (R-Ga.) published a donor appeal that included a photo of his Jewish opponent with a graphically enlarged nose. In the ad, a headline warns, "Democrats are trying to buy Georgia!" while photos show Democratic challenger Jon Ossoff and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), who is also Jewish. Ossoff's nose is clearly lengthened and pointed in his photo, originally taken by Reuters in 2017. A Perdue spokesman said "an outside vendor" had mistakenly enlarged Ossoff's nose by resizing the image and applying a filter. Experts, however, told *Forward.com* that other features of Ossoff's face remained in proportion. The ad was viewed by 3,000 to 4,000 Facebook users before the campaign removed it. Ossoff, for his part, called the enlarged nose "the oldest, most obvious, least original anti-Semitic trope in history." "Senator," he wrote, "literally no one believes your excuses."

Jacksonville, Fla.

Convention flip-flop: President Trump canceled the Jacksonville portion of the Republican National Convention last week as coronavirus cases in Florida continued to mount. The party had moved the convention from Charlotte, N.C., where Gov. Roy Cooper refused to guarantee the state would allow a gigantic indoor event. However, Jacksonville officials balked at the risk of the event after Florida became a key virus hot spot, and Trump conceded that the timing "is not right." He said that he'd accept the nomination during a pared-down, yet still "exciting," convention in Charlotte. Trump abruptly made the decision after campaign officials reportedly told him that he could still frame it as demonstrating leadership. Trump said during a White House briefing, "I have to protect the American people. That's what I've always done." Trump's convention seesaw has reportedly cost the party millions—with the original \$38 million raised for Charlotte already spent. "I am livid," said one frustrated donor.



An arena with no audience



Protesting for women's rights

Warsaw**Quitting domestic violence treaty:**

Poland's nationalist government this week filed paperwork to exit an international treaty aimed at curbing domestic violence, leading tens of thousands of Polish women to take to the streets of Warsaw in protest. Deputy Justice Minister

Marcin Romanowski told Catholic broadcaster Radio Maryja that the pact—known as the Istanbul Convention and signed by most European nations—was “gender gibberish” that could undermine traditional families. The treaty states that “culture, custom, religion, tradition, or so-called ‘honor’ shall not be regarded as justification” for acts of violence, a clause that the ruling Law and Justice party says unfairly links religion to violence.

Reynosa, Mexico

Stuck on the border: The United Nations is stepping in to provide temporary housing for Central American migrants who are stranded on the Mexican side of the border awaiting U.S. asylum hearings. Thousands of migrants have been housed in shelters there for months, but now that the coronavirus pandemic is spreading in Mexico, shelters won't accept new arrivals. Several migrants ended up out in the wind and rain during Tropical Storm Hanna. The U.N. refugee agency said this week it would set up 48 refugee housing units—massive prefab structures that are commonly used in Africa. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security said last week that asylum hearings will not resume until both U.S. and Mexican border states have the coronavirus under control.

Stuttgart, Germany

U.S. troops out: The U.S. will pull 12,000 troops out of Germany and relocate them at a cost of billions of dollars, the Pentagon announced this week. Lawmakers from both parties in Congress oppose the shift, saying it will weaken the military deterrent against Russia. But President Trump insisted he wanted no more than 25,000 troops in Germany, saying the country does not spend enough on defense. About half the troops will return to the U.S., and the other half will deploy elsewhere in Europe, requiring new housing and facilities to be built in both locations. The U.S. European Command, based in Stuttgart, will move to Belgium. The Pentagon said the move will take “years to execute,” indicating it could be reversed should Trump lose the election.



Heading home?

Bogotá, Colombia

Setback for Uribe: The witness-tampering trial of former Colombian President Alvaro Uribe took an odd turn this week when his lawyer, Diego Cadena, was also charged with witness tampering in the same case. Cadena is alleged to have pressured two witnesses in 2018 to testify in favor of Uribe in an investigation into Uribe's alleged links with paramilitary groups. Prosecutors say

Cadena went to a prison and offered a jailed ex-paramilitary member \$200 million to change his testimony and testify against Sen. Iván Cepeda, an Uribe opponent who has accused the ex-president of founding a death squad. At another prison, prosecutors said, the lawyer offered a militant perks in exchange for testimony. Cadena denies the charges. Uribe was president from 2002 to 2010 and then a senator, but he stepped down from the Senate in 2018 when he was charged with witness tampering.



Cadena and Uribe

Reykjavik, Iceland

Undiplomatic: U.S. Ambassador Jeffrey Gunter drew criticism from his Icelandic hosts last week after he tweeted “We are United to defeat the Invisible China Virus!” and added both the U.S. and Icelandic flags.



U.S. Ambassador Gunter

Icelandic politicians called the tweet “racist” and “foolish.” A California dermatologist and GOP donor with no diplomatic experience, Gunter has had trouble working with career diplomats and has gone through seven deputy chiefs of mission since arriving in May 2019. CBS reported this week that Gunter had wanted the State Department to get the Icelandic government to let him carry a firearm. They say he also wanted door-to-door armored-car service and a “stab-proof vest.” Iceland (population 364,000) is one of the safest countries in the world.

**Brasília**

Accusing Bolsonaro: Brazilian doctors say President Jair Bolsonaro should be tried for crimes against humanity over his mishandling of the country's coronavirus outbreak. A coalition of unions and other groups representing more than 1 million health-care workers filed a complaint this week with the International Criminal Court in the Hague, Netherlands, accusing the far-right president of treating the crisis with “contempt, neglect, and denial.” Brazil has registered some 2.5 million Covid-19 cases and 90,000 deaths; only the U.S. has suffered more infections and fatalities. Yet Bolsonaro has consistently downplayed the threat from the virus, calling it a “little flu” and refusing to mobilize federal health resources against it. He has touted the discredited Covid-19 treatment hydroxychloroquine, crediting the antimalarial with helping him recover from the coronavirus.

Moscow

Rushing out a vaccine: Russia says it will approve the world's first coronavirus vaccine by Aug. 10, a lightning-fast development that has many experts worried that Russia has skipped essential testing steps that ensure safety and effectiveness. "It's a Sputnik moment," said Kirill Dmitriev, head of Russia's sovereign wealth fund, referring to the 1957 launch of the world's first satellite by the USSR. "Russia will have got there first." Russian officials say their research has proceeded so fast because they are using a



Getting the new shot

modified form of an existing vaccine, but they have released no data on their testing. The Defense Ministry claims that dozens of soldiers volunteered to be injected with the vaccine. Officially, some 830,000 Russians have tested positive for coronavirus and about 14,000 have died, but the true number of cases and fatalities is likely much higher.



Kuala Lumpur

1MDB conviction: Former Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak was sentenced to 12 years in prison this week for looting \$4.5 billion from a

state investment fund—some \$700 million of which was funneled into his personal bank accounts. Najib, whose government was brought down by the scandal two years ago, was found guilty of abuse of power, breach of trust, and money laundering, and must pay a fine of \$48 million. The 1Malaysia Development Berhad fund (1MDB), established by Najib, was found to have amassed some \$11 billion in debt when the scandal broke in 2015. Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim said the conviction of Najib on all charges in the first of his five trials related to the fund brings "a renewed hope for Malaysians" in their fight against corruption. Najib's sentence has been stayed pending an appeal; he will not lose his seat in the parliament.

Getty, AP (2), Zuma/Newscom

Bandar Abbas, Iran

Aiming at U.S.: Iran launched ballistic missiles from an underground base at a mock U.S. aircraft carrier during military exercises this week, a barrage of fire that caused two American bases in the region to temporarily go on alert. Iranian commandos also rappelled down from a helicopter onto the replica, while fast boats practiced swarming it. An Iranian news agency then published a graphic showing an American carrier in the shape of a casket with crosshairs on it, with a caption quoting Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's pledge to seek revenge for the U.S. drone strike that killed a top Iranian general in January. Meanwhile, a U.S. fighter jet last week flew close to an Iranian civilian airliner over Syria, forcing the passenger plane to veer away and causing passengers to tumble about the cabin. Several people were injured.



Circling the fake carrier

Masteri, Sudan

Dozens killed in Darfur: More than 80 people were killed in Sudan's restive Darfur region this week when unidentified gunmen attacked the village of Masteri, burning houses and looting the market. The attackers may have been displaced Sudanese who fled their farms years ago and who now want their old properties back. Black rebels and Arab Janjaweed militias loyal to ex-dictator Omar al-Bashir have been fighting in Darfur since 2003, a conflict that has forced millions from their homes. After Bashir was ousted last year, a cease-fire deal was reached by the interim civilian-military government, and Darfuris are now beginning to leave refugee camps. Some black residents, though, say Arab militias are still active in the area and are trying to take over their land. The Sudanese government said it would send troops to the region.

Hong Kong

Fired for activism: The University of Hong Kong has fired the law professor who led the 2014 pro-democracy protests known as the Umbrella Movement. Benny Tai said his sacking "marks the end of academic freedom" for Hong Kongers, writing on Facebook that "academic staff in education institutions in Hong Kong are no longer free to make controversial statements to the general public about politically or socially controversial matters." Tai, who spent months in jail for his role in those protests, has been accused by authorities of trying to launch a revolution because he helped organize opposition primaries earlier this month. More than 600,000 people voted in the primaries, despite government warnings that the vote might be illegal under the new national security law. Beijing's Hong Kong Office said, "Benny Tai and his like are the chief culprits for creating the chaotic situation in Hong Kong."



Tai: Punished

Sydney

Fake abductions: Criminals are tricking Chinese students in Australia into faking their own kidnappings to extort money from their parents back in China, police in New South Wales said this week. A Mandarin speaker claiming to be from the Chinese government calls the students and convinces them they have been implicated in a crime in China and must make payments to avoid being deported or arrested. Victims are instructed to check into a hotel and then send a message to their family saying they have been kidnapped, along with a picture of themselves tied up and blindfolded. Police said there have been at least eight cases this year, with more than \$2 million paid in ransom to unknown bank accounts for abductions that never happened.

Killer Mike's political ambitions



Killer Mike is not your typical celebrity dabbling in politics, said Donovan Ramsey in *GQ*. Born Michael Render, Killer Mike (for “microphone killer”) is one half of the rap duo Run the Jewels. His speech in his hometown of Atlanta after George Floyd’s death struck a powerful balance between rage and restraint. “I woke up wanting to see the world burn down,” Mike said that day, addressing protesters. “It is your duty *not* to burn your own house down for anger with an enemy. It is your duty to fortify your own house. Now is the time to plot, plan, strategize, organize, and mobilize.” Mike, 45, grew up surrounded by black professionals and activists with strong, independent political views. “My grandfather could be best described as a libertarian,” he says. “He believed in small government. Fishing licenses were an abomination to him.” A childhood shaped by drug dealing and police violence shaped Mike’s unusual politics: He supports gun rights and capitalism but backed Sanders, a democratic socialist. He dreams of running for office himself and would push Atlanta to support black-owned banks and businesses and the city’s historically black colleges. If that sounds far-fetched, so is being a rapper taken seriously as a political leader. His life is like “a goddamn BET movie,” he says. “So I got to believe everything is possible.”

Stone's contempt for Hollywood

Oliver Stone’s iconic run of films has been overshadowed by his reputation as a political provocateur, said David Marchese in *The New York Times Magazine*. Stone won directing Academy Awards for *Platoon* and *Born on the Fourth of July*, and wrote seminal 1980s flicks *Scarface* and *Wall Street*. Those films earned him a reputation as a generational talent. But over time, his focus as a filmmaker turned to politicians like George W. Bush, Richard Nixon, Fidel Castro, and Vladimir Putin, and he became viewed as a far-left conspiracy theorist. Stone, 73, says he’s given up on making mainstream movies. “The problem is Hollywood,” he says. “Everything has become too fragile, too sensitive. You can’t make a film without a sensitivity counselor. It’s like an *Alice in Wonderland* tea party.” Stone makes no apologies for the contrarian political narratives of films like *JFK*, which portrayed the assassination as the product of a grand plot involving the CIA, or for his largely flattering documentary about Putin. “I’ve negotiated my way, sometimes with great controversy, through life,” he says. “I enjoy give-and-take. I will continue not to run away from who I am. I’m going to own who I am.”



How Diaz became a winemaker

Cameron Diaz has a new profession, said Tim Chan in *Rolling Stone*. Diaz, 47, hasn’t appeared in a major movie role since 2014’s *Annie*, and in 2018 she nonchalantly announced her “retirement” from acting—shortly before she and her husband, Benji Madden, had a daughter. But for the past two years she’s been studying oenology and making deals with French and Spanish vineyards in order to produce her own label, Avaline. Thanks to her movie-star wealth and travels, Diaz says, she has enjoyed some of the world’s finest wines—“big, beautiful, very expensive, highly sought-after vintages.” Her brand is geared toward casual nights on the porch: Avaline’s rosé and dry white blend are marketed as “clean” and organic, and go for about \$20 each. Diaz insists she’s serious about winemaking. “I’ve never slapped my name on anything,” she says. “I’ve always done the work. I don’t think anyone could blame me for wanting to spend time in beautiful organic and biodynamic vineyards touring centuries-old wine caves [and] learning from passionate winemakers.” Granted, being Cameron Diaz did help open doors. “I did make movies for 20-plus years,” she says, “so I guess it’s finally paying off.”

In the news



■ **Kanye West** publicly apologized last week to his wife, **Kim Kardashian**, after claiming she “tried to bring a doctor” to his Wyoming ranch “to lock me up” in a psychiatric hospital. West had had a meltdown at a rally for his presidential campaign in South Carolina the previous week, announcing that he and Kardashian had decided to abort their first daughter until God told him not to. “I almost killed my daughter!” a sobbing West screamed. A distraught Kardashian said in a statement that “Kanye has bipolar disorder” and that dealing with mental illness is

“incredibly complicated and painful,” and requested privacy for her “brilliant but complicated” husband. He later briefly sought medical care at a local hospital. In his apology, West, 43, said he was wrong to air “a private” matter, and said to Kardashian, “Thank you for always being there for me.”

■ During a libel trial filled with lurid accusations, **Amber Heard** testified that her ex-husband, **Johnny Depp**, turned into a character he called “the monster” when he abused drugs and alcohol, and physically assaulted her 14 times. Depp, 57, sued *The Sun* (U.K.) for calling him a “wifebeater,” and testified that it was Heard, 34, who was abusive. Heard said, however, that Depp was a “needy man-child” who could be “intensely affectionate and charming” when sober but who would grow dark and violent

when drinking and using drugs, leaving her in constant fear. “He explicitly threatened to kill me many times,” said Heard, who obtained a restraining order after their separation. The best man at their wedding testified that right after their ceremony, Depp told him, “Now I can punch her in the face and no one can do anything about it.”

■ Los Angeles Clippers guard **Lou Williams** was told to quarantine for 10 days this week after sneaking off to an Atlanta strip club during an excused absence from the NBA’s Florida bubble. Williams, 33, had left to attend a wake for a family friend, but a rapper posted an Instagram photo of Williams at the popular club Magic City. Williams said he was there for takeout. “Ask any of my teammates what’s my favorite restaurant in Atlanta,” he tweeted. “Ain’t nobody partying.”

Schoolkids and the coronavirus

As schools and parents struggle with the decision to reopen in-person classes, what do we know about kids' vulnerability?

Can children get Covid-19?

Yes, but the evidence strongly suggests that children are less prone to infection by the coronavirus than adults. Those under 18 account for about 6 percent of confirmed cases in the U.S., despite constituting some 22 percent of the population, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That figure is somewhat higher than numbers from China, where children and teens accounted for 2.2 percent of confirmed cases, Italy (1.2 percent), and Spain (0.8 percent). A study published in *Nature* in June found that children and teenagers were about half as likely as adults to get infected by the virus. "It seems, consistently, children do have lower rates of infection than adults," said Alison Tribble, a pediatric infectious disease expert at the University of Michigan. Some doctors, however, believe pediatric infections are significantly undercounted because they're often asymptomatic. New data from hard-hit states, including Arizona and Mississippi, have shown children accounting for some 10 percent of cases.

Can children get seriously ill?

In rare cases. But the *Nature* study found that among those between 10 and 19, only 21 percent showed any symptoms at all. Hospitalizations are rare among the young, and deaths rarer still; as of July 22, the COVKID Project, which tracks pediatric figures in the U.S., counted 77 deaths among the young from a total of more than 144,000 deaths overall, and just over 800 intensive-care admissions. Over a three-month period ending in May, one study found only 44 deaths among children and teenagers across France, Germany, Italy, South Korea, Spain, the U.K., and the U.S.; during that period there were 13,000 pediatric deaths from normal causes. A small number of children who've contracted Covid have been afflicted with multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children, or MIS-C, an immune response that causes severe inflammation throughout the body, attacking the blood vessels, heart, kidneys, and other organs. *The New England Journal of Medicine* counted approximately 1,000 victims worldwide, with a median age of 8.

Why are children less vulnerable?

It's "a huge puzzle," said Nicholas Davies, an epidemiologist at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. But there are several theories. One is that children's cells have fewer of the ACE2 receptors the coronavirus latches on to in order to launch an infection. Another theory is that since kids are frequently infected with the relatively benign coronaviruses that cause common colds, those infections generate



A temperature check at a summer school in Texas

a level of "cross-immunity" to the new coronavirus. The many immunizations children get may have a similar spillover protective effect. Yet another possibility is that children's immune systems are simply stronger and better suited to fighting the virus, in ways that aren't clear. And some hypothesize that children are better equipped to fight off novel pathogens, as they're constantly called on to do it. "Everything an infant sees, or a young child sees, is new," said Donna Farber, an immunologist at Columbia University.

Can children infect others?

This is the million-dollar question. Numerous studies from Europe and Asia have suggested children pass the disease on to others at a lower rate than adults. In a study of 39 Swiss households infected with Covid, children were suspected of having been the source in only three. In a French study, an infected boy exposed more than 80 classmates to the virus—and none contracted it. "The data are striking," pediatric disease specialist William Raszka wrote in the journal *Pediatrics* in July, citing these studies and three others. "The key takeaway is that children are not driving the pandemic." But age seems to be a key factor: A new, large-scale study from South Korea found a significant difference between children under 10 and teens.

What is the difference?

The study confirmed that younger children are significantly less likely to spread the virus—but found those between 10 and 19 transmit the virus at similar rates to adults. That lines up with evidence offered by reopened schools in Israel, New Zealand, and France, where the largest outbreaks have been in middle and high schools. A study of French schools by a scientist at the Pasteur Institute in Paris found that the risk of infection was much greater in high schools than in elementary schools. "We need to make sure to differentiate between young and older children," said Alyssa Bilinski, a Harvard doctoral student who's studying school outbreaks. "By the time you reach high school, the risk of infection is pretty indistinguishable from young adults." And even if young children have a much lower risk of infection and transmission, experts warn, there will inevitably be some outbreaks in schools. Kids aren't a "bubbled population," said Michael Osterholm, an infectious-disease expert at the University of Minnesota. "There will be transmission" in schools, and "we have to include that in our plans."

The school experience abroad

Schools offer the best opportunity to study transmission among the young—and there the evidence is mixed. A number of European countries, including Germany, Norway, and Denmark, have reopened schools without incident; researchers in Australia, Ireland, and Finland have also found no evidence of school spread in those countries. Most of these schools adopted some social-distancing approaches. But schools have had to close after outbreaks in China, South Korea, and most notably Israel, where more than 100 schools were shut in early June due to outbreaks that infected over 2,000 students and staff members. Experts say that many factors affect school spread, including class size and whether kids wear masks and socially distance. The rate of infection in the community can also play a major role. No country with rates anywhere near those of say, Los Angeles, Phoenix, or Miami has attempted school reopenings, so there's no model for what might result in places where classroom learning returns this fall. "Schools will now be the experiment," said Aaron Carroll, a pediatrician at the Indiana University School of Medicine. "We will see what happens."

Disinfecting surfaces is 'hygiene theater'

Derek Thompson
TheAtlantic.com

"As a Covid-19 summer surge sweeps the country, deep cleans are all the rage," said Derek Thompson. Restaurants, gyms, offices, and mass transit are all trying to create public confidence by spraying oceans of disinfectants on "every square inch of America's surface area." Sorry, but "this may all be a huge waste of time"—a piece of "hygiene theater" with no practical purpose. Scientists studying how the coronavirus has spread have concluded that surface transmission is extremely rare. Instead, they have traced nearly all outbreaks to airborne respiratory droplets spread from person to person—large droplets expelled in sneezes and coughs, and smaller aerosolized droplets from speech or even exhalations, which can linger in the air of indoor spaces. In real-world conditions, scientists say, the virus does not survive on surfaces for very long. We should all still wash our hands when out in public, but studies have concluded that people aren't getting infected from packages, elevator buttons, or door handles. It's wearing masks, distancing, and moving activities outdoors that actually keep us safe. Theatrically blasting surfaces with disinfectants "builds a false sense of security" in indoor spaces, "which can ironically lead to more infections."

Using prison to silence Cohen

Nicholas Goldberg
Los Angeles Times

Jailing citizens who dare to criticize the dear leader "happens in authoritarian countries," not the U.S., said Nicholas Goldberg. But President Trump's longtime fixer, Michael Cohen, was hauled off to prison as "retaliation" for writing a tell-all memoir about his former boss, federal District Judge Alvin Hellerstein ruled last week. Cohen pleaded guilty in 2018 to campaign-finance violations, having failed to disclose hush-money payments to Trump's alleged mistresses. Like many inmates, Cohen was transferred to home confinement in May because of the pandemic. But the Justice Department decided to make the release conditional on Cohen's not speaking to the media or publishing the book, which Cohen says will quote Trump making racist and anti-Semitic statements. When Cohen balked, "he was cuffed and returned to prison." The government's imprisonment of Cohen to keep him from exercising "his First Amendment rights," Hellerstein said, was something he'd never seen in 21 years on the bench. Trump is ramping up his "harassment and bullying of critics": He previously tried to block books by former national security adviser John Bolton and Trump's niece Mary. "Thank goodness for judges who will stand up to Trump."

A feminist icon's overt racism

Kristan Hawkins
USA Today

Margaret Sanger deserves the same treatment as Confederate generals, said Kristan Hawkins. The founder of Planned Parenthood, long celebrated by feminists and memorialized at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, was a racist who promoted birth control in the early 20th century as a form of eugenics. Though Sanger opposed abortion, she saw birth control as a mean to achieve "the gradual suppression, elimination, and eventual extinction of defective stocks," including the disabled, the poor, and blacks. In her "Negro Project," she sought to enlist black doctors and ministers to promote birth control. Today, Planned Parenthood has many clinics in minority neighborhoods, and the abortion rate of black women is five times that of white women. In New York City, there are nearly as many abortions every year among black women as live births. Despite her racism, Sanger is honored with a statue in Boston, a New York City square that bears her name, and a bust at the Smithsonian. It would be sheer hypocrisy to remove tributes to Confederates and let Sanger's stand. Sanger's "images and honors should be pulled down to gather dust in history's closet."

Viewpoint

"Separating my parents from my children was an easy decision at the beginning. But as the weeks wore on and we all began to understand with dreadful clarity that this was not going away anytime soon—and maybe ever—it became harder to keep them away. I don't know how to tell someone I love not to put themselves at risk when they've decided that risk is inherent in their day-to-day existence. And so I let them see my kids, and I cringe each time my 2-year-old hugs my mother. How do I live with myself if I deny them memories with their grandchildren? Then again, how do I live with myself if my indulgence leads to an illness?"

Casey Taylor in *NewRepublic.com*

It must be true... I read it in the tabloids

■ A psychiatrist in Ottawa has been censured for repeatedly falling asleep during sessions with patients. The College of Physicians and Surgeons ruled that the man, named only as Dr. N.J.K., must try to stay awake, after a patient said he had dozed off in at least five appointments. "She explained that she had lived a life of invalidation, keeping secrets to herself because she thought no one would care," said the ruling. "And his falling asleep in the process made her feel weak and unimportant." Dr. N.J.K. apologized and said he'd move the patient's appointments to the morning.

■ An escaped pet kangaroo went hopping down residential streets in Fort Lauderdale until police were summoned to catch him. "At first we didn't really



believe it, 'cause there was only one call," said Officer Robert Norvis, "so when we got there, there, sure enough, was a kangaroo." Cops captured the marsupial using a dog collar. "He didn't resist," said Norvis. "I actually was expecting to get kicked, but he was very friendly."

■ A Long Island criminal tried to escape prison by faking his own death certificate—but was caught when he misspelled a word. Robert Berger, 25, was facing sentencing for attempted grand larceny and possession of a stolen car, but his fiancée sent word he'd killed himself, and sent a very authentic-looking certificate. But officials were tipped off that the document was fake because it had a misplaced "i" in the word "Regsitry." Berger now faces an extra four years for forging the document. "Crime doesn't pay," said Nassau County District Attorney Madeline Singas. "We'll catch up with you eventually."

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UNITED KINGDOM

Scotland would fare better alone

Adam Ramsay
The Guardian

Britain's coronavirus debacle is driving ever more Scots to embrace independence, said Adam Ramsay. When Scotland held its independence referendum in 2014, 55 percent voted to remain part of the U.K. Now 54 percent of Scottish voters back secession, up 5 percentage points since spring. Discontent was growing even before the pandemic. Scots were strongly against Brexit, and many "clung to the idea of a second European referendum." That hope "was the final branch keeping them in the unionist tree," and when Britain left the European Union in January, it snapped. Then the coronavirus struck, and Scotland's lack

of control over its own affairs became lethal. Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has been "open, honest, and caring," a welcome contrast to Prime Minister Boris Johnson's blustering and fumbling. But while Scotland's lockdown was stricter than England's, we couldn't start it as early as Sturgeon wanted, because we don't have our own Treasury to pay furloughed workers. London holds the purse strings. The coronavirus death rate is lower in Scotland than in England, but "it's hard not to look to our safer-still nearest neighbors—Ireland and Norway—and wonder where we'd be if we, too, were independent of the failing British state."

BELARUS

Middle class turns on the dictator

Yuriy Panchenko and
Tatiana Kalinovskaya
Europeiska Pravda (Ukraine)

Alexander Lukashenko is about to lose by winning, said Yuriy Panchenko and Tatiana Kalinovskaya. The Belarusian president, often called Europe's last dictator, has been in power since 1994. And he will almost certainly claim another five-year term in the August election, since he controls the election oversight body and the opposition has "no way to verify its figures." Still, the campaign has shown that he "is rapidly losing popularity and has fewer and fewer resources to buy it." After his regime barred three top opposition leaders from running, their wives registered as candidates in their place. The women are running a joint opposition campaign under Svetlana Tikha-

novskaya, the wife of blogger and activist Sergei Tikhanovsky. The opposition was once dominated by the intelligentsia, but the middle class is "now the backbone" of the movement. These are "people from small businesses, the ones who are the most affected by the pandemic and whom the state refuses to help." Not so long ago, Lukashenko could buy votes by raising public salaries, but more Belarusians now work in the private sector, and "they don't fear losing their jobs after being detained at a rally." The 65-year-old Lukashenko may rig a win. But "a new generation of voters has come on the scene, and they won't put up with the lack of choice."

Turkey: Undoing Ataturk's legacy

In antiquity, the Hagia Sophia was considered "the eighth wonder of the world," said Christiane Habermalz in *Deutschlandfunk.de* (Germany). Built as an Orthodox Christian cathedral in the 6th century by the Byzantine Emperor Justinian I, the domed marvel was converted into a mosque following the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453. In 1934, the grand house of worship in the heart of Istanbul underwent another transformation. Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, who abolished the Ottoman sultanate and created the modern secular Turkish republic, made the Hagia Sophia into a museum, hoping it would serve as a bridge between Islam and Christendom. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan tore down that bridge last month, said Gaston Carré in the *Luxemburger Wort* (Luxembourg), ordering that the Hagia Sophia once again become "a Mohammedan place of prayer." What makes the Hagia Sophia, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, so magnificent is the juxtaposition of cultures in its décor, "the counterpoint of its spires and domes, minarets and cupolas, calligraphy and mosaics." It's a metaphorical dialogue between East and West. But the Islamist Erdogan "doesn't do dialogue." By overturning Ataturk's vision, Erdogan has rejected secularism and cast himself as successor to the Ottomans.

When Erdogan read from the Quran at the mosque's rededication last week, he was announcing the "resurrection" of the Muslim world, said Ibrahim Karagul in *Yeni Safak* (Turkey). The West made Islam its new enemy after the fall of the Soviet



Worshippers gather outside the Hagia Sophia.

Union, launching a so-called war on terror that had nothing to do with terrorism. Instead, Western powers hoped to divide and conquer Muslim lands, much as they carved up the Ottoman Empire after World War I. Bloodshed spread from Afghanistan and Iraq to Syria and Yemen, and now "Muslim countries lie in ruins, cities are destroyed, nations are divided into fiefdoms." The attempted coup against Erdogan in 2016 was the next step in this war on Islam, but it failed. Our president purged those whose minds had been colonized by the West, and the Turkish state "gained a new consciousness." Turning the Hagia Sophia back into a mosque sends a signal to the West that its plot "to silence Islamic civilization and Turkish power" has failed.

Listen closely and you can "hear the footsteps of an early election," said Rahmi Turan in *Sozcu* (Turkey). In the two years since the last national vote, Erdogan's poll ratings have sunk as the country has stumbled from economic crisis to economic crisis. The rededication of the Hagia Sophia was designed to fire up his religious base; now he'll try to capitalize at the ballot box. It won't work, said Frank Nordhausen in the *Berliner Zeitung* (Germany). Polls show that more than 40 percent of Turkish voters think Erdogan "is just trying to divert attention from the economic crisis." And among the youngest cohort, now entering their 20s, 90 percent say they have no interest in religion. Ataturk "has long since won this contest."

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How they see us: A point of no return with China?

The Trump administration, “a group of political madmen,” wants a cold war with China, said the *Global Times* (China) in an editorial. U.S. law enforcement “broke into” the Chinese consulate in Houston last week, “blatantly violating international diplomatic conventions.” Accusing China of using the consulate as a base for espionage and influence operations, but providing no evidence to back up its claims, the U.S. ordered the outpost closed. It was just the latest in a string of provocations from Washington, including hundreds of billions of dollars in tariffs slapped on Chinese goods, a ban on our tech giants, and unfounded claims of human rights abuses. China has never struck first but has only taken countermeasures, standing “on the right side of international justice.” It wants neither a cold war nor a hot one. But if Washington is determined to blow up diplomatic ties, “accidental sparks may lead to unprecedented catastrophe.”



Removing a plaque at the U.S. consulate in Chengdu

Sinking in the polls, U.S. President Donald Trump is desperate to “distract voters from blaming him for the social and economic carnage wrought by the pandemic and his own abject failure to contain it,” said Yonden Lhatoo in the *South China Morning Post* (China). China is the fall guy. Trump’s “thuggish top diplomat,” U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, made “an unhinged rant of a speech” last week “that was beyond appalling in its ignorance and Sinophobia.” He painted China as a land of enslaved people who hate their evil leaders, when in fact a Harvard University poll found that 93 percent of Chinese are satisfied with their government, compared with a meager 38 percent of Americans.

America’s allies won’t join this new cold war, said Gwynne Dyer in the *Toronto Star* (Canada). They agree that China is a “nasty, corrupt dictatorship, intolerant of dissent and oppressive toward its minorities.” But Beijing is territorially expansionist only its own neighborhood, so Pompeo’s claim that China is “the central threat of our times” is a joke. America’s partners are just waiting for Trump to be voted out. Britain, for example, has ostensibly bowed to U.S. pressure and agreed to bar Chinese telecom Huawei from its

5G network. Actually, “British officials whispered in Huawei’s ear that all was not lost” and that they might reconsider next year. Unspoken was that the White House could well have a new occupant in 2021.

China can wait, said Xu Heqian in *CaixinGlobal.com* (China). We have already shown patience, waiting 72 hours after the closure of the Houston consulate before shutting the U.S. consulate in Chengdu. “Chinese policymakers are coolheaded and have long-term vision in the face of the present turbulence.” They support continued engagement with the U.S. Still, we can’t assume that all these tensions will simply blow over, said Shi Jiayou and Liu Lianshi, also in *CaixinGlobal.com*. The Trump administration could do real damage to our economy if it follows the advice of hawks in Washington and attempts to cut China off from the international dollar payments system. “Instead of blindly hoping for the best, China should plan ahead.”

LEBANON

Where your money belongs to the bank

Fifi Abou Dib
L’Orient Le Jour

Even well-off Lebanese are now effectively paupers, said Fifi Abou Dib. Our debt crisis has caused inflation, unemployment, and poverty to soar, and last fall the banks quit releasing our savings and blocked transfers from abroad. We entrusted our money to the banks, and they in turn gave it to that “immeasurable stupidity, bottomless greed, limitless ego, and idiotic sectarianism that serves as our state.” Now the banks are acting as self-proclaimed budget managers, “dictating what one is or is not allowed to spend.” Some have actually refused to let people withdraw money to pay for their children’s studies, with bankers

commenting that “a master’s degree is a luxury, Madam” or “your daughter is able to work, there is no shame in waiting tables.” Yet any Lebanese would say that an education is the most important thing to give our children these days, because it will mean they can escape Lebanon and find work abroad. With cash so tight, “grocery accounts now occupy most of our mental activity,” as we exhaust ourselves calculating exchange rates between the dollar and the Lebanese pound, comparing credit card rates and cash rates, official rates and black-market rates. “Never has this country been so vulnerable, never have we felt so naked.”

JAPAN

Pushing back against sumo’s bullies

Editorial
Asahi Shimbun

The world of sumo is still far too violent, said the *Asahi Shimbun*. Despite promises of reform after past hazing scandals, abuse persists. An investigation by the Japan Sumo Association recently found that stablemaster Nakagawa—real name Asahisato Kenji—“repeatedly kicked and struck disciples” for minor infractions and constantly threatened to fire them, sometimes shouting, “I will kill you!” What’s especially shocking is that while the Nakagawa stable in Kawasaki has been disbanded, Asahisato wasn’t kicked out of the association altogether and is still a sumo elder. That sends the “wrong message to audiences both within and outside the

sumo world.” After all, Japan last year passed a new law to crack down on “power harassment,” or the bullying of employees, and one pro soccer coach has already been fired. Sumo scholars say that this harassment is possible because stablemasters, who earn their prestigious positions thanks to their wrestling skill and not their management chops, are “often clueless as to what to do when they cannot communicate effectively with young wrestlers.” Sumo needs a licensing system for its coaches, to ensure that they are compliant with society’s new norms. If the sport continues its bullying ways, it “will only fall into decline.”

Noted

■ Thirty-two police officers were fatally shot in the U.S. through July 13—a 28 percent surge over the same period in 2019. Law enforcement officials say anti-police sentiment is playing a major part in the increase, which included seven officers who were killed in planned ambushes. *ABCNews.com*

■ Nearly half of adults in the U.S. have an underlying condition that puts them at risk for a severe illness or death from Covid-19. Federal data show that 47 percent of Americans suffer from exacerbating conditions such as obesity, heart disease, diabetes, chronic lung disease, and chronic kidney disease.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

■ White House health adviser Anthony Fauci said he's facing a growing number of "serious

threats" to himself and his family,

which has led to the government providing security. "There are people who get really angry at thinking I'm interfering with their life because I'm pushing a public-health agenda," Fauci said in an interview. "I've seen a side of society that's...a little bit disturbing."

CNN.com

■ A multiday revival event at an Alabama Baptist church has led to more than 40 coronavirus infections. "The whole church has got it, just about," said Daryl Ross of Warrior Creek Missionary Baptist Church in Marshall County. He said attendees were not required to wear masks or remain distant. *ABCNews.com*

MLB's outbreak: Will it shut down sports?

The joy of baseball's return lasted just four days, said **Thomas Boswell** in *Washington Post.com*. Fifteen Miami Marlins players and two coaches tested positive for Covid-19 this week, forcing Major League Baseball to suspend Miami's season and cancel a host of games. The outbreak not only endangered the entire baseball season but

also shattered the "naïve assumption" underlying all sports' plans to reopen: "If a virus hit a team, it would infect one or two players, maybe three." Now it's clear that Covid-19 can run through a team like a wildfire. "I'm scared, I really am," admitted Washington Nationals manager Dave Martinez, 55, who has a heart condition and already lost star player Juan Soto to a positive test. If baseball, socially distanced by nature, can't work, professional and college football are "never going to happen."

So far, MLB owners have opted against canceling the season, said **Helene Elliott** in the *Los Angeles Times*, instead "reminding players not to spit or share high fives, and then hoping for the best." If it wasn't clear before this outbreak, it now is: "Money is driving this madness," with the health



Marlins celebrating a victory before their outbreak

of players, coaches, and their families a distant second. Perhaps the NHL and NBA will fare better, since they will resume this week with heavily tested players living and playing inside containment "bubbles": Hockey's in Canada, basketball's at Disney World in Orlando. The NFL faces a much tougher challenge, said

Gentry Estes in the Nashville *Tennessean*. It currently plans to have teams play "home" and "away" games and travel among cities, which greatly raises the risk that players will be infected in "troublesome hot spots." The NFL should scrap its schedule and create "hubs" for teams in areas with low infection rates.

With the pandemic still raging in the U.S., said **Corbin Smith** in *NBCNews.com*, it's irresponsible for baseball, football, and college football to be playing games, even without fans. "But eventually the business interests won out," with President Trump and billionaire owners insisting on sending players back to perform for us. In fairness, said **Bob Nightengale** in *USA Today*, some players just wanted to compete again and offer the country an escape from all the grim news.

China: The new cold war

"Step by step, blow by blow," America's diplomatic relations with China are hurtling toward the "point of no return," said **Edward Wong** and **Steven Lee Myers** in *The New York Times*. Last week, the Trump administration ordered the country's Houston consulate closed, with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo calling it a "hub of spying and intellectual property theft." China retaliated by ordering America's consulate in Chengdu shuttered. Federal agents arrested four alleged Chinese spies—one of whom briefly sought sanctuary in the San Francisco consulate. Pompeo even went so far as to say that President Nixon had been wrong to open a relationship with China in the first place, adding that our future relations should be "based on the principle of 'distrust and verify.'"

Some of Pompeo's criticism of China "was spot on," said **Fred Kaplan** in *Slate.com*. Under Xi Jinping's rule, China has become far more aggressive. It is laying claim to the contested South China Sea, its hackers and industrial spies are stealing large volumes of trade secrets, and China has revoked Hong Kong's freedoms and sent 1 million Uighurs to indoctrination camps. But the administration's response to these provocations has been incoherent. Trump forfeited the moral standing necessary

for such scolding after he caged migrant children and gassed protesters. And how do we disengage from China when it's still the source of so many of our consumer goods, and holds \$1 trillion of our debt? No one seems to care that "we are doddering toward conflict with a fellow nuclear power," said **Bonnie Kristian** at *NBCNews.com*. Both Republicans and Democrats, including presumptive party nominee Joe Biden, are "glibly competing for the title of 'biggest China hawk.'" But where does this high-risk conflict lead?

The truth is, we're losing the most important competition with China—over technology, said **David Goldman** in *The Wall Street Journal*. China is ahead of us in such important areas as "5G broadband, quantum cryptography, and key applications of AI." Its government is subsidizing "capital-intensive industry the way the U.S. subsidizes stadiums." America won the first cold war through a massive subsidy of research and development (to the tune of 1.2 percent of GDP, or double the current percentage), as well as an emphasis on military technological supremacy that sparked private-sector innovations such as the internet. Now China is playing from a "winning hand," while America falls further and further behind.

Ocasio-Cortez: The Democrats' future?

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez just gave a “brilliant defense” of women in power, said **Kara Alaimo** in *CNN.com*. With a powerful speech on the House floor, the New York congresswoman, a Democrat, called out her colleague, Rep. Ted Yoho (R-Fla.), for his “aggressive and brazenly misogynistic personal attack” on her on the Capitol’s steps. Ocasio-Cortez was walking by Yoho when he called her “disgusting”



AOC: Not putting up with it

for suggesting that joblessness and poverty were fueling New York City crime. He then muttered “f---ing bitch” while walking away. A reporter overheard him, forcing Yoho to issue a “cowardly non-apology” citing his 45-year marriage and two daughters as proof of his respect for women. Ocasio-Cortez had heard enough, and shredded not only Yoho but “everyone from President Donald Trump to men on the subway” for a wider culture of misogyny in which men get away with threatening and demeaning women. “Having a daughter does not make a man decent,” she said. “Treating people with dignity and respect makes a decent man.”

Ocasio-Cortez should spare us her “feigned outrage,” said **Miranda Devine** in *NYPPost.com*. Yoho claims he actually said “f---ing BS.” And before

her “pantomime of fainting-couch feminism” on the House floor, Ocasio-Cortez originally made light of the situation by tweeting, “Hey ‘bitches’ get stuff done.” This was nothing more than a politician seizing the moment to score some cheap and divisive political points. She’s “a wolf in lamb’s clothing.”

Actually, this was an important moment, said **Lisa**

Lerer in *The New York Times*. Men have been using the word “bitch” to undercut and demean “women in power since before they ever had any real power at all.” I once saw a 10-year-old child at a Trump rally chant “bitch” about Hillary Clinton, who endured hearing that word 10,000 times. The fact that AOC felt emboldened to shame Yoho on the House floor marks a “shift in our politics.” AOC is going places, said **Maureen Dowd**, also in *The Times*. She showed remarkable instinct and skill in capitalizing on female voters’ growing disgust with President Trump, Yoho, and the GOP’s other “Paleolithic” jerks. “The youngest woman to ever serve in Congress” is “so full of natural political talent that the 2020 field seems dull next to her luster.” She and other smart, ambitious women represent the future. Yoho knows it, which is why he’s so angry.

Trump: A policy of self-enrichment

Add another item to the list of Donald Trump’s impeachable offenses, said **Paul Waldman** in *The Washington Post*. *The New York Times* reported last week that Trump directed the U.S. Ambassador to Britain, Woody Johnson, to ask the British government to steer the British Open to Trump’s Turnberry golf resort in Scotland. Johnson, a billionaire Trump donor with no previous diplomatic experience, told colleagues in February 2018 that he’d asked the secretary of state for Scotland about the possibility of holding the famed tournament at Turnberry—which would have pumped millions into the financially ailing resort. The unethical request unsettled numerous diplomats, including Johnson’s deputy, Lewis Lukens, who recounted it in an email to officials at the State Department—and was fired a few months later. Corruption of this magnitude “would have gotten any other president removed from office,” but after Trump’s years of violating ethical norms, it barely raises an eyebrow.

“The Trump Era is at heart one massive gift,” said **Scott Martelle** in the *Los Angeles Times*. Since he took office, Trump has pumped millions of taxpayer dollars into his properties on hundreds of presidential visits to his resorts, where Secret Ser-

vice agents have paid as much as \$650 a night for rooms. Trump has likewise turned his re-election campaign into a cash cow, said **Karen Tumulty** in *The Washington Post*. In two days in March, his campaign spent \$380,000 for “facility rental/catering services” at his hotels. In all, his campaign and various Republican committees have spent more than \$22 million at Trump properties since 2015. And that’s not to mention the millions spent by foreign governments and special interest groups looking to curry favor with the president. In U.S. history, “there has never been anything quite like the racket” Trump is working.

There’s much more we can only guess at, said **Josh Marshall** in *TalkingPointsMemo.com*. Corruption “has touched every sinew of the president’s administration and the great majority of it almost certainly remains unknown.” And as the British Open incident demonstrates, “these corrupt acts now likely litter our bilateral relationships” with Saudi Arabia, India, and many other countries. If Trump is defeated in November, America needs a thorough accounting. Without a full understanding of the damage Trump’s lawlessness and corruption has wrought, “we simply cannot move forward as a society or a political system.”

Wit & Wisdom

“The first half of our lives is ruined by our parents, the second half by our children.”

Lawyer Clarence Darrow,
quoted in *Reader’s Digest*

“Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living.”
Labor activist Mary Harris,
quoted in the *Chicago Tribune*

“The butterfly counts not months but moments, and has time enough.”
Poet Rabindranath Tagore,
quoted in the *Montreal Gazette*

“Freedom is not a state; it is an act. It is not some enchanted garden perched high on a distant plateau where we can finally sit down and rest. Freedom is the continuous action we all must take.”
Rep. John Lewis,
quoted in *Essence*

“Technology is a way of organizing the universe so that man doesn’t have to experience it.”
Playwright Max Frisch,
quoted in *INews.co.uk*

“If liberty means anything at all it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear.”
George Orwell, quoted in
New York magazine

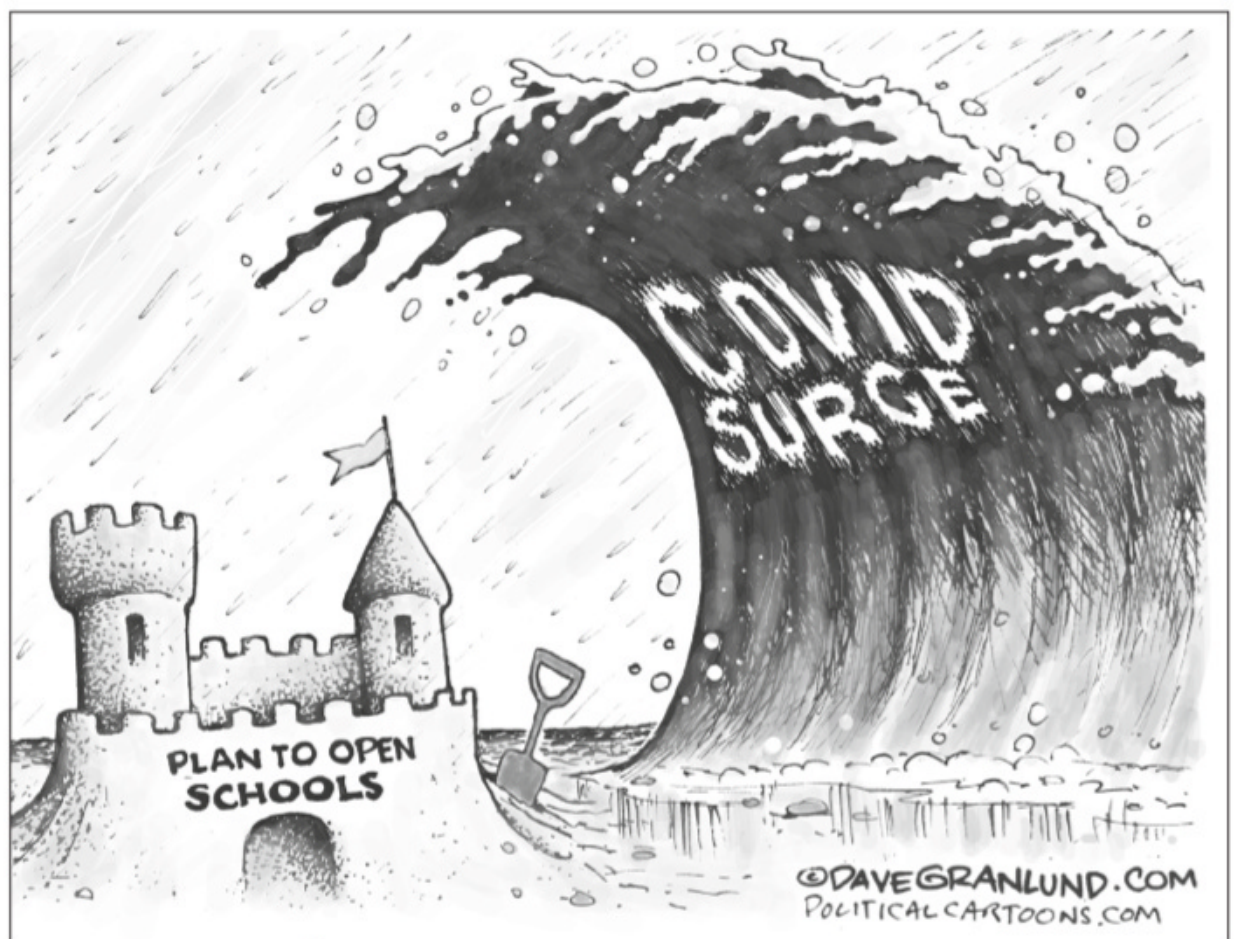
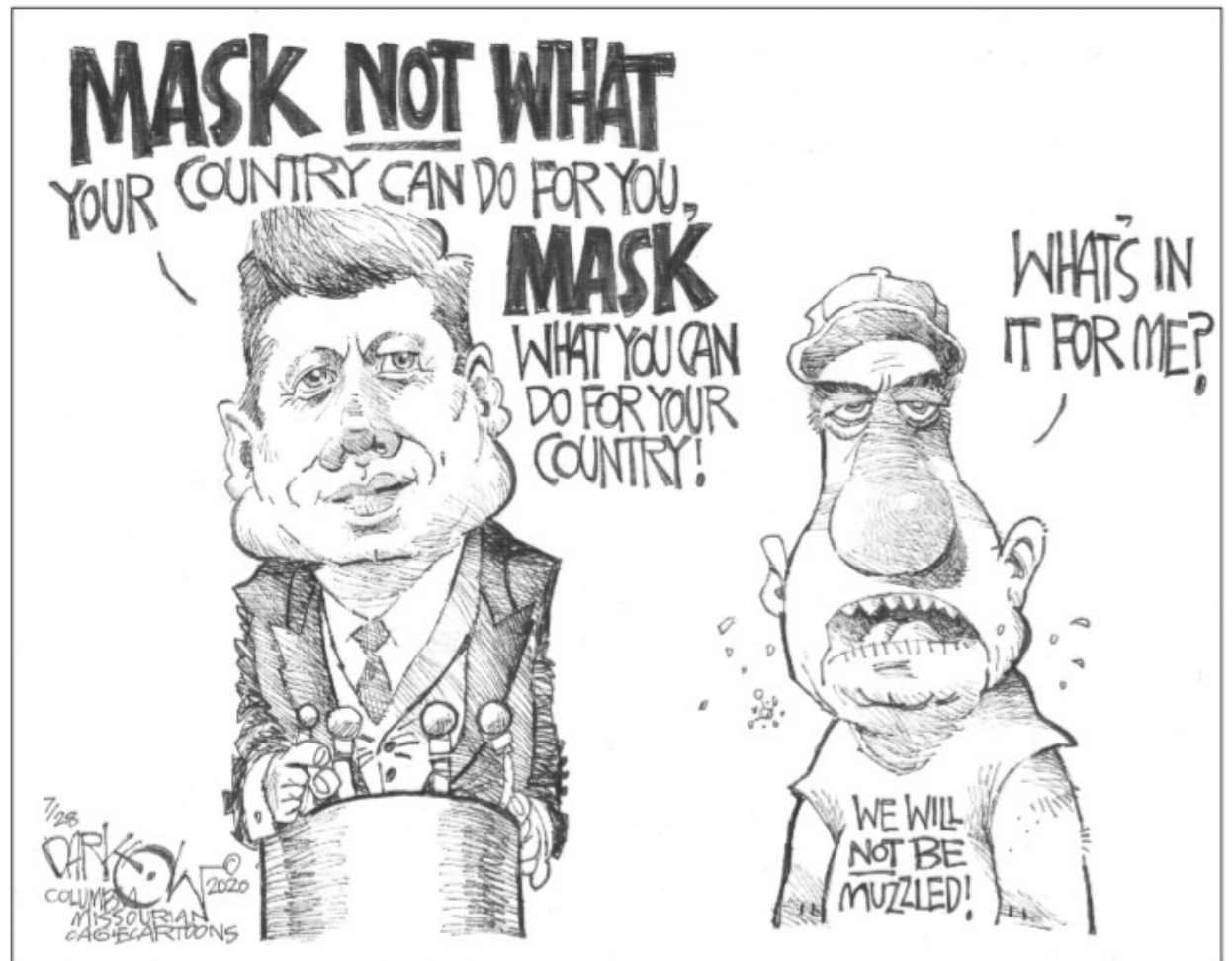
“Brevity is the soul of lingerie.”
Dorothy Parker, quoted
in *Forbes.com*

Poll watch

■ **34%** of Americans identify as conservative, down from a high of **40%** in February. **26%** identify as liberal, and **36%** identify as moderate.
Gallup

■ An all-time high of **80%** of Americans believe the country is headed in the wrong direction. A majority disapprove of how President Trump is handling the coronavirus pandemic (**68%**), education (**63%**), health care (**63%**), and the economy (**51%**).
AP/NORC





Telemedicine: Can virtual visits replace a doctor's touch?

The rise of telemedicine may be “a silver lining in the coronavirus pandemic,” said **Cherlynn Low** in *Engadget.com*. With many doctors’ offices closed and people worried about leaving their homes, virtual visits have “surged as a way for patients to seek medical advice without stepping outside.” Congress approved an expansion of Medicare coverage to include telehealth nationwide, and allocated money for communications services to make sure patients with critical needs can get remote follow-ups. The tech giants have taken notice; Microsoft introduced a new “Cloud for Healthcare” in May. Now many patients are growing accustomed to the convenience. They might not want to revisit the “obstacles that can become excuses for not seeking a doctor.”



Remote diagnosis poses a new challenge.

node too firm, a spleen or liver too large, or an unexpected prostate nodule?”

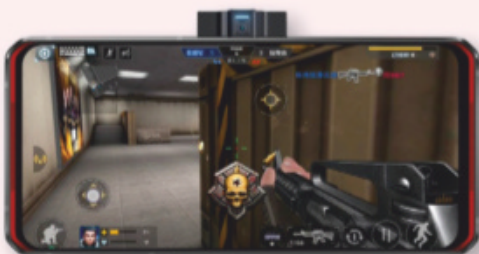
Accessibility is another concern, said **Laurence Du Sault** in the *San Jose Mercury News*, particularly for seniors. Some 73 percent of low-income seniors have no internet access. And many seniors who do are still not comfortable “registering online for appointments, accessing programs requiring a Google or Facebook account, getting text messages for prescriptions and emails for Medicare update or appointment reminders.”

The same telemedicine systems that remove obstacles for some patients create insurmountable barriers for others. “Many adults have lost access to health care altogether,” one doctor cautions.

Providers are less bullish on the shift, said **Ateev Mehrotra** in *StatNews.com*, mainly because it’s hard for most small practices to implement. “A practice must buy appropriate technology. Clinical schedules need to be changed. Documentation protocols must be updated. And on and on.” Some doctors are also “leery about taking the plunge” because of concerns about how much insurers, particularly Medicaid, will cover. As a primary care physician, I think the technology is fine, said **David Blumenthal** in the *Harvard Business Review*. But I also know it will never replace in-person care. “Well-trained clinicians use all their senses” and examine the whole patient. “Could a Zoom visit detect a lymph

One area in which telemedicine has been a great development is mental-health care, said **Shira Ovide** in *The New York Times*. Seeing patients by web video or telephone has “removed barriers that prevented many people from accessing services.” That should be reason enough to make telehealth “a permanent feature of U.S. mental-health care,” said *Bloomberg.com* in an editorial. Research has found that remote therapy can be just as effective as in-person consultations, which is why many doctors have grown comfortable with it in recent months. “Unfortunately, as things stand now, the federal government and many private insurers will reverse this shift once the coronavirus threat fades.”

Innovation of the week



Lenovo’s first “gaming phone” features liquid cooling and a pop-out camera for streaming, said **Igor Bonifacic** in *Engadget.com*. There are other smartphones designed primarily for hard-core video gamers on the market in the U.S., where Lenovo’s Legion Phone Duel currently isn’t planning to sell. But it is nonetheless “a beast of a device.” The “liquid cooling” copper pipe keeps the top-of-the-line Qualcomm Snapdragon 865 Plus processor and up to 16GB of RAM from overheating. The Duel also boasts a 20-megapixel camera that’s “different” from other pop-up front-facing cameras. Lenovo’s version “slides up from the side of the device,” like a webcam on a monitor, “making it all but useless for taking selfies but great for people who want to stream their play sessions on Twitch.”

Bytes: What’s new in tech

Immigration rules hamper tech hiring

Companies that rely on highly skilled software engineers say they may shift jobs to Canada because of restrictive new U.S. immigration policies, said **Kim Lyons** in *The Verge.com*. Duolingo, “Pittsburgh’s first \$1 billion venture capital-funded startup” has used the city’s low cost of living “as a selling point to try to coax talent away from Silicon Valley.” But CEO **Luis van Ahn** says he also relies on immigrants, and if they can’t come to the U.S. he’ll make new hires in Toronto. Canadian tech companies have also noticed, and have not been shy about competing for engineers who can’t get to the United States. “Canada is awesome,” tweeted the CEO of Ottawa-based Shopify, “give it a try”—adding that workers could still move south if immigration rules changed.

Trump text messages blocked as spam

“A test run of one of Donald Trump’s most important voter contact programs was abruptly shut down,” said **Alex Isenstadt** and **John Hendel** in *Politico.com*. Over the July 4 weekend, Trump’s campaign sent out “over 1 million patriotic-themed messages” to supporters as a “dry run” to avoid later problems such as those encountered by Mitt Romney in 2012, “when his lightly tested voter turn-

out program crashed as people headed to the polls.” But the messages were quickly flagged as spam by Verizon, T-Mobile, and AT&T. All three leave decisions on spam blocking to “third-party administrators,” which automatically block suspect texts. It took Trump’s son-in-law and White House adviser **Jared Kushner** five days to resolve the shutdown, possibly costing millions of dollars in donations and raising fears of similar “roadblocks in the run-up to the election.”

A single empire of ‘clickbait’

The Justice Department said it would not stand in the way of a merger between the two largest “clickbait” ad networks, said **Brent Kendall** and **Patience Haggin** in *The Wall Street Journal*. While you may not recognize the names **Taboola Ltd.** and **Outbrain Inc.**, you’ve seen their ads deployed by “many high-profile publishers next to their articles.” More politely called “content recommendations,” Taboola’s tough-to-resist clickbait content includes “Remember These Star Trek Women? This Is How They Look Now.” Outbrain offers “Hilarious Tattoo Fails” and “Shortest Men in Hollywood.” They are surprisingly effective: Both companies are profitable, with combined revenue of \$2 billion.

Hopes for annual shot to counter Lyme

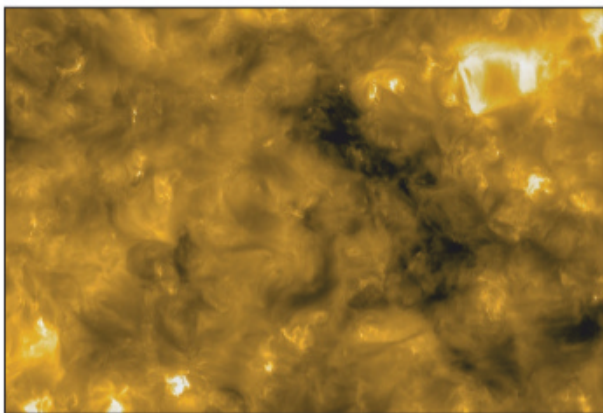
There's currently no safe and effective vaccine for Lyme disease, but a new shot administered once a year might be able to block the debilitating infection before it starts. Caused by a bacteria transmitted by ticks, Lyme can result in a range of long-term issues if left untreated, including arthritis and various cardiac and neurological conditions. Some 300,000 people are thought to contract the disease in the U.S. every year. The Food and Drug Administration approved a Lyme vaccine in 1998, but it was discontinued three years later amid fears over its side effects. To create the new shot, known as Lyme PrEP,

researchers identified and developed an antibody contained within that vaccine that prevents infection. Unlike a vaccine, which triggers a patient's immune system into creating antibodies, Lyme PrEP delivers the antibody directly into the body. Lyme PrEP has proven 100 percent effective in mice, protecting them for several weeks; the researchers now believe they have extended the shot's protective benefits in humans to cover the nine months when 90 percent of Lyme cases occur. Human trials of Lyme PrEP are due to start this summer to determine if the shot is safe and how long it lasts in the bloodstream. "The



The tick-borne disease can be debilitating.

Covid-19 pandemic has put in sharp focus the need to prevent infections," project leader Mark Klempner, from the University of Massachusetts Medical School, tells *The Washington Post*. "Lyme disease has become an insidious epidemic."



A super close-up of our neighborhood star

'Campfires' on the sun

A solar probe built by NASA and the European Space Agency has sent back the closest photos ever taken of the sun, revealing a roiling surface dotted with tiny solar flares that scientists have nicknamed "campfires." Snapped from 48 million miles away—roughly halfway between the sun and Earth—these blazes are thought to be mini explosions about one-millionth or one-billionth of the size of the solar flares that have been observed from Earth. Millions or billions of these nanoflares could be heating the sun's outer shield, known as the corona; that may explain why the corona is 300 times hotter than the star's surface, a fact that has long puzzled researchers. "We've never been closer to the sun with a camera," Daniel Müller of the European Space Agency told *The New York Times*. "And this is just the beginning of the long epic journey of Solar Orbiter." The probe will complete 22 orbits of the sun over the next 10 years. Its primary mission is to help determine the origins of solar wind—charged particles ejected by the sun that can affect satellites and electronics on Earth.

Promising Covid-19 treatment

In a potential breakthrough that has been greeted with equal parts hope and skepticism, British researchers say a commonly used medicine can slash the odds

of Covid-19 patients becoming severely ill. That drug, SNG001, is based on a protein called interferon beta. The body typically produces interferon to fight off viruses, but the coronavirus blocks that response. The study involved 101 Covid-19 hospital patients; half were given SNG001 via an inhaler for 14 days, half received a placebo. The patients given the drug had a 79 percent lower chance of needing ventilation or dying compared with those given the placebo. They were also twice as likely to show signs of recovery. The researchers say it's vital to administer the medicine via an inhaler, delivering it straight to the lungs. However, many experts say the study is too small to draw any firm conclusions. "It is good to see new treatments being developed," Martin Landray, a University of Oxford epidemiologist, tells *The Guardian* (U.K.). "But there is a big difference between encouraging early results and definitive evidence."

Polar bear extinction

All but a few polar bears in the Arctic will be gone by the end of the century if green-

house gas emissions stay on their current trajectory. That's the dispiriting conclusion of the first study to predict when the species will start to near extinction, reports *USA Today*. Polar bears are under threat because global warming is melting the sea ice where they hunt for seals, their primary food source. Prolonged periods of fasting, coupled with reduced nursing of cubs by mothers, will lead to sharp declines in reproduction. Scientists estimate there are fewer than 26,000 polar bears left in the wild, split into 19 subpopulations. The study found that if the rise in planet-warming emissions continues unabated, nearly all 19 groups will be wiped out by 2100. Even if emissions are reduced, the researchers concluded, most polar bear populations would suffer reproductive failure by 2080. "We knew that polar bears would ultimately disappear unless we halt greenhouse gas rise," says co-author Steven Amstrup, from the University of Wyoming. "But knowing when they will begin to disappear in different areas is critical for informing management and policy—and inspiring action."

The blackest fish

Down in the deep ocean, marine biologists have discovered fish with skin so black they're practically invisible. To qualify for "ultra-black" status, a substance must reflect less than 0.5 percent of the light that hits it. Some birds of paradise make the grade, reflecting as little as 0.05 percent, as do certain butterflies and spiders. (Black paper, in contrast, beams back a whopping 10 percent.) In the waters of Monterey Bay and the Gulf of Mexico, researchers identified 16 species of ultra-black fish, including the



A fangtooth: Its scales don't shimmer.

fangtooth and the black swallower. The darkest, an anglerfish, reflects as little as 0.04 percent of light. This isn't merely the result of dark pigment under the skin: The fish also have packets of black pigment that form an outer layer. They likely evolved this blacker-than-black skin to stay hidden, from either predators or prey, in an environment that's teeming with light-emitting creatures. "We've got searchlights from predators, we have lures," lead author Alexander Davis, from Duke University, tells *NBCNews.com*. "There's all sorts of light produced by animals down there."

Review of reviews: Books

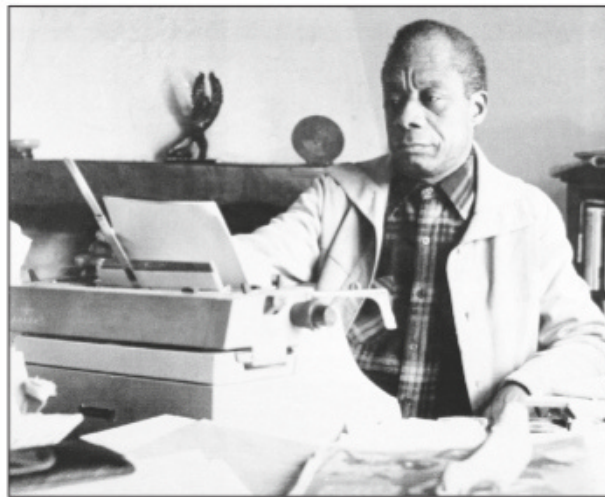
Book of the week

Begin Again: James Baldwin's America and Its Urgent Lessons for Our Own

by Eddie S. Glaude Jr. (Crown, \$27)

"It's hard to imagine a better moment for this book to appear," said **Jeremy Rutledge** in the Charleston, S.C., *Post and Courier*. Others before Eddie Glaude Jr. have looked back to author James Baldwin to make sense of the Black Lives Matter era. But Glaude, a professor of African-American studies at Princeton, weds his voice with Baldwin's to make the case for a moral revolution. Focusing on Baldwin's more disillusioned late writing, Glaude argues that the great novelist and essayist exposed a grand lie undergirding U.S. society: that the country is, in Glaude's words, "fundamentally good and innocent." The result is "a book unlike any other." The force of its truths caused me "to shout, to weep, to shake," and then to set it down to catch my breath.

"*Begin Again* is two different books," said **Kenneth Mack** in *The Washington Post*.



Baldwin at his typewriter in 1983

The first offers a penetrating exegesis of Baldwin's post-1963 texts, when assassinations and other race-based violence inspired him to focus on how nonwhite Americans should respond to the persistence of white faith in the nation's pureness. Baldwin urged testimony that belies the myth, which is a useful suggestion. "But Glaude also has a second project," that of explaining how Baldwin's words apply today, and here he stumbles. Glaude still thinks Barack Obama did so little to address systemic racism that he fails to recognize the importance of Obama's election as an event that both

renewed America's faith in its innocence and that prompted the political rise of Donald Trump. Still, the book hits like a hammer, said **Hugh Hewitt**, also in the *Post*. The post-World War II experience of black Americans that it illuminates will be "stunning to anyone who has lived overwhelmingly in an Anglo world."

Begin Again also illuminates the stark choice that America now faces, said **Glenn Altschuler** in the *Florida Courier*. The country can continue pretending that it offers equal opportunity to all—and that racial disparities in housing and wealth are earned—or it can enact a "third founding" as a multiracial republic fully alert to its history of slavery and white privilege. Glaude suggests certain steps, such as the paying of reparations. "He is not optimistic, however, that radical change will come anytime soon." But Glaude, like Baldwin, is ultimately hopeful, said **Claire Howorth** in *VanityFair.com*. His brutally honest book "shores up the spirit" at a moment when America is in pain. "We can't give Breonna Taylor and George Floyd their lives back," but "if Glaude's right, we have the opportunity to begin again."

Novel of the week

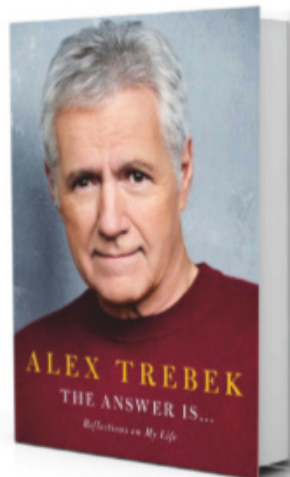
Hamnet

by Maggie O'Farrell (Knopf, \$27)

The loss at the center of Maggie O'Farrell's "magnificent and searing" eighth novel is a matter of record, said **Laura Collins-Hughes** in *The Boston Globe*. William Shakespeare's only son, Hamnet, died at 11, most likely of the bubonic plague. But around that tragedy O'Farrell has built a story of the family "so bursting with life, touched by magic, and anchored in affection that I only wish it were true." She never uses Shakespeare's name, and she has rechristened his wife as Agnes, but that gives the author freedom. Agnes proves to be "a character for the ages"—a beautiful potion maker who's "nearly literally bewitching to behold in every scene she's in," said **Alexis Burling** in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. When Hamnet dies, her pain is so great that William flees Stratford-on-Avon, burying himself in his work in London, including the writing of *Hamlet*, the tragedy loosely named for his son. Most authors wouldn't dare write Shakespeare into a novel; O'Farrell's "wholly original, fully engrossing" work manages the feat with "barely a flubbed line or misplaced stage prop in sight."

The Answer Is... Reflections on My Life

by Alex Trebek (Simon & Schuster, \$26)



Alex Trebek apparently doesn't have what it takes to be a great *Jeopardy* champion, said **Ruth Graham** in *Slate.com*. Though the host of the popular quiz show has for 36 years projected "erudite unflapability" on air, he confesses in his

new memoir that he considers most of his guests to be superior players. "Against my peers (people in a coma), I'd do fine," the 80-year-old icon writes. "But a good 30-year-old would clean my clock." Still, "Trebek's genius has never been in his intellect; it's in his steadiness." In these pages, he comes across as "a thoroughly wholesome mensch."

Trebek, who is battling stage 4 pancreatic cancer while still working, mostly casts his life story as "an amusing series of vignettes," said **Angela Haupt** in *The Washington Post*. The Ontario-born son of

a Ukrainian-born pastry chef, Trebek was mildly rebellious as a young man, dropping out of military college rather than submit to a buzz cut. But his life and career have been almost comically free of scandal. When he moved to Hollywood after a decade in Canadian broadcasting, he took up cursing to fit in better but still considered low-fat milk his drink of choice. "Trebek has a tendency to mention things in an offhand way that would be long chapters in a more typical memoir," said **Eric Deggans** in *NPR.org*. "Like his two heart attacks. Or his struggles with depression." Or the half brother he wasn't aware of until the mid-1980s.

It is, for sure, "a memoir of consummate caginess, one of the wariest I've read," said **Parul Sehgal** in *The New York Times*. But Trebek has always been unshowy: On *Jeopardy*, he has become a father figure by "showing up reliably at dinnertime and remaining tantalizingly aloof," and "in the autumn of the media patriarchs, he stands practically alone, untinged by scandal" and faithful to facts. His time is probably short, he acknowledges, vowing that his current round of chemotherapy will likely be his last. "He ends the book at home, like of all us, in quarantine." He is exhausted by uncertainty and the chemo, but still "sublimely calm and grateful."

Best books...chosen by Aimee Bender

Aimee Bender is the best-selling author of *The Particular Sadness of Lemon Cake*. In her new novel, *The Butterfly Lampshade*, a young woman tries to make sense of visions she's had since childhood, when her mother was taken away.



The Center Cannot Hold by Elyn Saks (2007). This truly remarkable memoir chronicles the experiences of lawyer and professor Elyn Saks, who lives with schizophrenia. She writes about her times in hospitals and on the analytic couch with incredible clarity, honesty, and curiosity.

Big Machine by Victor LaValle (2009). LaValle writes horror, but horror as a way to move in closer to the complexities of our minds and our society. This novel takes the reader on a wild coast-to-coast journey that begins in an unusual library in a forest and includes many vividly memorable scenes, allowing for amazing, surreal access to our protagonist's psyche and the inner workings of America.

The Freddie Stories by Lynda Barry (1999). I remember reading this years ago and crying, moved by how intensely Barry dives into a child's point of view through words and illustrations. There's no one like her in that way. Freddie is having a rough time: with school, with his own fluctuating grasp on things, with family, with his dark thoughts and fears, and Barry jumps into his world and enacts it with her usual compassion and realness and love.

Jesus' Son by Denis Johnson (1992). This classic collection of short stories is about a character dealing with addiction, but Johnson masterfully elucidates the "spirit" component of alcoholic "spirits": His writing is almost otherworldly in its attunement to what's below surfaces, gliding into these spaces with words that capture our most nuanced internal states.

Convenience Store Woman by Sayaka Murata (2016). The narrator of this novel works at a Tokyo convenience store and loves the routine of the job; she is also something of an anthropologist, noting her observations of human behavior in a distant and yet utterly open way. Watching her try to participate in the world is both moving and unsettling.

Remainder by Tom McCarthy (2005). My favorite part of this novel is how the main character is so fixated on re-creating a very specific scene from his past, and he's not even sure why. It's an act of theater, and memory, and something powerfully unconscious—and we are witness to the process. He is a kind of inverted Proust, making the madeleine from scratch to evoke the thing you didn't know needed evoking.

Author of the week

Leïla Slimani

Ever since she won the country's top literary prize in 2016, Leïla Slimani has been "a poster girl for a new, more youthful France," said Kim Willsher in *The Observer* (U.K.). But the Moroccan-French writer hasn't exactly



played by the rules. When newly elected President Emmanuel Macron asked her to be his culture minister, she hung

up on him. "I thought my husband had put someone up to it, that it was a joke, so I ended the call," she says. (Later, she agreed to serve as an ambassador of Francophone culture.) Rather than write a quick follow-up to *The Perfect Nanny*, her fiction breakout, she used her fame to spotlight a problem for women in her native Morocco. *Sex and Lies*, which arrived in the U.S. this month, features Slimani's conversations with Moroccan women about living in a country where sex outside marriage is an imprisonable offense.

Slimani, now 38, rejects a common criticism that she's imposing Western mores on an Arab culture, said Sarah McCammon in *NPR.org*. "As you can imagine, everyone is having sex in Morocco like everywhere else," she says. But, because of the threat of arrest, dishonesty is expected. "Everyone is telling you, 'Do whatever you want, but lie,'" Slimani says. "People want you to hide yourself." Slimani has now gathered enough petition signatures to force a vote in the Moroccan parliament that could end the laws that force women to seek illegal abortions and make them more vulnerable to sexual violence. But her *Sex and Lies* is not just for her allies. It is for everyone, she says, including "those I detest." The book, she says, "is a mirror they cannot break, that makes them look reality in the face."

Also of interest...in friendships tested

Love

by Roddy Doyle (Viking, \$27)



"If you're new to Roddy Doyle, don't let the Irish lingo daunt you," said Joseph Peschel in *The Boston Globe*. Understanding the slang becomes second nature—"unless you're some sort of eejit"—and Doyle's 12th novel is a "brilliant" two-character study built around a night when two old friends catch up over pints at various Dublin pubs. Their chatter touches on wives, past loves, and conflicting memories, and despite getting "surprisingly weighty" goes down "as smooth as gulps of beer."

Want

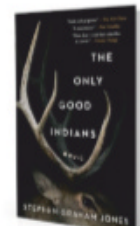
by Lynn Steger Strong (Holt, \$26)



Lynn Steger Strong's potent second novel is "a story about the price women pay for craving what's just out of reach," said Annabel Guterman in *Time*. Its narrator is a Brooklyn mother of two, with two jobs and an underemployed husband, none helping much with crushing student debt. When Elizabeth reconnects with her childhood best friend, it's no fix. Still, "Strong writes of their friendship in exacting detail, illustrating the ferocity with which women can care for one another."

The Only Good Indians

by Stephen Graham Jones (Gallery/Saga, \$27)



Stephen Graham Jones is "one of the best writers working today," and his latest horror novel "might just be his best yet," said Gabino Iglesias in *NPR.org*. Four friends who—like Jones—are Blackfeet are haunted by a night when they slaughtered nine elk, including one that was pregnant. In a story that illuminates contemporary Native American life from the inside, the horror that visits the men years later is "unlike anything you've read before," and "guilt is so present, it's almost a character."

Big Friendship

by Aminatou Sow and Ann Friedman (Simon & Schuster, \$26)



A relationship doesn't have to be romantic to be serious, said Trish Hall in *The New York Times*. The authors of this "thoughtful and highly readable" book have plenty riding on theirs: The long-distance chums host the popular podcast *Call Your Girlfriend*. But while most readers won't enter therapy to repair a friendship rift, as these two did, they will learn from the story. "Friendships must be nourished," after all, "or they will wither."

24 ARTS Review of reviews: Music & Podcasts

Taylor Swift Folklore

★★★★★



Taylor Swift's new album "reminds us once again that she's the most gifted songwriter in music today," said **Patrick Ryan** in *USA Today*. Created during quarantine and surprise-released last week, *Folklore* turns out to be the 30-year-old pop star's most introspective album yet and a sharp turn away from high-sheen pop to stripped-down songcraft in the tradition of Joni Mitchell and Carole King. The year's new top-selling album includes 16 songs in its streaming edition, and every one is "a treasure trove of evocative metaphors and diarylike lyrics, managing to capture familiar feelings in ways you didn't know were possible." Swift collaborated with the National's Aaron Dessner on 11 songs, though, and his influence proves unwelcome, said **Jon Caramanica** in *The New York Times*. The National comes from the school of indie rock that mistakes "mopey interiority" for depth, and Dessner's taste for "gauzy" strings and other atmospherics causes the subtler songs to be "obscured by murk."

Yes, *Folklore* is often melancholy, said **Rob Sheffield** in *Rolling Stone*. But Swift must



Swift at 30: Back to basics

have realized that she wouldn't be touring these songs, "so she gave up on doing anything rah-rah or stadium-friendly" and just wrote the "most heartbreaking, emotionally ambitious" songs of her life. "Some of us have spent years dreaming Taylor would do a whole album like this," and yet "nobody really dreamed it would turn out this great"—in fact, her best yet. Swift "knows her own mythology like a model knows her angles," though, and she seems to be playing the long game here, using a pandemic year to shore up her standing with critics, said **Jillian Mapes** in *Pitchfork.com*. Still, this is excellent pop music, a project that reaffirms something that has always been true of Swift: "Her biggest strength is her storytelling, her well-honed songwriting craft meeting the vivid whimsy of her imagination."

Logic No Pressure

★★★★★



"If Logic is truly done, *No Pressure* is a solid, soulful finale," said **A.D. Amorosi** in *Variety*. The "congenially loquacious" rapper from Rockville, Md., announced his retirement last week, at age 30, saying he wants to concentrate on being a father to his newborn son. Coming off a 2019 album that topped *Billboard*'s chart but on which his rapping came across as "haphazard and preachy," the popular and prolific performer sounds once again "focused and forceful" here: "Building upon labyrinthine beds of sound and plump rhythms with lyrics that are both funny and frank, Logic is in his best kid-like Q-Tip mode." Across his 10-year, six-album, five-mixtape, and one-novel career, the rapper has written candidly about mental illness, suicide, and the dangers of always putting work first, said **Donna-Claire Chesman** in *DJBooth.net*. "Potent enough to force us to rethink our lives," *No Pressure* makes a fitting farewell. "If there's one thing to learn from his music, it's this: You can only throw yourself so far into your craft before it swallows you. Don't drown in the work. Learn how to use the work to buoy yourself."

New and notable podcasts

Guru

(Wondery)



The producers of the real-life crime series *Dirty John* and *Dr. Death* are "sure to make you even more fearful of human interaction with their latest series," said

Hannah Davies in *TheGuardian.com*. Self-help guru James Arthur Ray, an Oprah Winfrey-endorsed writer and speaker, became so influential in the mid-aughts that he was able to charge \$10,000 a head for his "Spiritual Warrior" retreats. But then three of the 50 attendees at a 2009 session in Arizona died after Ray coaxed fasting participants to spend hours inside a makeshift sweat lodge. Interviews with survivors help listeners understand Ray's dangerous powers of persuasion, said **Nick Schager** in *TheDailyBeast.com*. The series' "most poignant voice," though, belongs to the mother of one of the victims, who speaks with palpable fury. You can hardly blame her: Ray, who was convicted of negligent homicide but served only 20 months in prison, has since returned to the self-help business, "recasting the 'Spiritual Warrior' calamity as part of his narrative of personal growth."

Richard II

(The Public Theater)



"Not to get all sappy about it, but *Shakespeare in the Park* is the heart of New York City," said **Helen Shaw** in *NYMag.com*. The pandemic has forced the cancel-

lation of this summer's free performances in Central Park, but the Public Theater has retooled its planned staging of *Richard II* into a four-episode podcast featuring a star-studded, nearly all-black cast led by André Holland. Shakespeare's ornate language isn't easy to follow, but the narration by Lupita Nyong'o helps, and each episode includes conversations with cast members and scholars that bring out the play's echoes with our summer of George Floyd protests and Covid. To me, the commentary feels didactic, said **Maya Phillips** in *The New York Times*. But *Moonlight*'s Holland plays the titular deposed monarch with compelling grace and a voice that is at times so intimate "you can almost feel his breath against your cheek." The podcast isn't a perfect substitute for live Shakespeare in Central Park. Still, "I am glad I got to hear this king."

Clever Creature

(ART19)



This freewheeling series is "a bit different from your average podcast," said **Rusty Blazenhoff** in *BoingBoing.net*. Hosted by *BigThink.com*'s Jason Gots, the experimental vari-

ety show relies on chance: The theme of each episode is determined by an online random-word generator. Gots gives himself 24 hours to write a song and a short story using that word, then invites guests to mull over its multiple possible meanings and implications. Guests have included novelist Gish Jen, humorist David Sedaris, and Gots' 12-year-old son, and the looseness of the participants' conversations gives the show "a refreshing edge." So far, "the songs are better than the short stories," said **Miranda Sawyer** in *The Observer* (U.K.). But intriguing chats usually follow. Jen uses the word "church" to ponder her childhood dreams of sainthood, and *Dolly Parton's America* producer Shima Oliabee uses "rally" to explore group dynamics. There's even a guided meditation at the end of each episode. The hodgepodge of forms manages to be "ambitious and touching."

Waiting for *Tenet*: How one movie could decide Hollywood's future

The countdown to the release of *Tenet* has become a thriller in itself, said Tom Brueggemann in *IndieWire.com*. When Warner Bros. made the “extraordinary” announcement this week that the highly anticipated time-inversion spy thriller from director Christopher Nolan will now open in most of the world before a rescheduled Sept. 3 bow in “select” U.S. theaters, it indicated that the movie business has arrived at a crossroads: Tired of waiting for a return to normalcy, the studios are forcing the action by indicating that they’ll take as many screens as they can get for the movies once positioned to be this year’s blockbusters. Expect AMC and other major exhibitors to now apply a “full-court press” to win city and state approvals for pre-Labor Day reopenings. If Nolan’s latest mind bender winds up debuting in 3,000 theaters or more—and that’s still possible—“there’s a number of things we’ll learn beyond what his movie is about.” Mostly, whether moviegoing in 2020 America remains viable.

“The only thing clear at this point is that nobody knows exactly what will happen next,” said Keith Phipps in *TheRinger.com*.



Tenet’s John David Washington and Elizabeth Debicki

After being twice delayed, *Tenet* may be pioneering a return to an old way of rolling out big films—with a staggered release of the kind that preceded the saturation strategy of *Jaws*, the 1975 thriller that launched the blockbuster era. *IndieWire* has speculated that Disney might give its just-delayed live-action version of *Mulan* a September date if *Tenet* works, and a *Wonder Woman* sequel is still on the calendar for early October. But don’t count on one movie changing everything, said Scott Mendelsohn in *Forbes.com*. *Tenet*

is actually slotted in behind a few less-anticipated warm-up acts: the Russell Crowe thriller *Unhinged* (now due Aug. 21), and *Bill and Ted Face the Music*, a stoner-comedy sequel (Sept. 1). And because many studios have already pushed back their would-be blockbusters by a year, *Tenet* “may end up being a one-of-a-kind tentpole release,” not a trailblazer.

Let’s not mourn the blockbuster formula if it dies this year, said Ann Hornaday in *The Washington Post*. Once before, around 1970, “Hollywood was on the brink of extinction,” and bounced back from its big-budget bombs and the challenge of TV with “one of the most creatively rich eras in American cinema.” The storied renegades behind *The Godfather* and *Raging Bull* are part of that story, but the revolution was far wider, because even the decade’s entertaining junk was built on the proposition that it’s wisest to bet not on spectacle but on good storytelling and unique creative talent. “If the ’70s taught us anything, it’s that audiences will reward films that take risks, especially when they strive for excellence, engage human values, and meet their moment.”



Dyer: A quiet turn for teen sex comedies

Yes, God, Yes



This gentle comedy from a first-time director “captures something indelible about adolescent female desire,” said Katie Walsh in the *Los Angeles Times*. Natalia Dyer of *Stranger Things* plays a 16-year-old Catholic school student who is struggling to reconcile her emerging sexual desires with the celibacy instruction she gets from the try-too-hard priest who teaches morality class. But filmmaker Karen Maine remembers not just “all the confusion and shame”; she also recalls the pleasures of that time in life, as reflected in the way her camera occasionally mimics the lustful gaze of the movie’s good-girl protagonist. Anyone who’s ever been 16 will enjoy the movie’s quiet humor built around the mysteries of sex, said Kate Erbland in

IndieWire.com. But there’s also enough specificity to the early 2000s Catholic setting that “this former Catholic schoolgirl frequently gasped in recognition”—especially once Dyer’s Alice joins a four-day faith retreat at which she can’t stop ogling an older boy. Though the script is as smart as you’d expect from a co-writer of *Obvious Child*, Dyer’s subtle performance carries the film, said Bill Goodykoontz in *The Arizona Republic*. Her Alice is vulnerable yet strong. “And if she isn’t always confident that she’ll figure things out eventually, we are.” (\$7) R

Other new movies on demand

Retaliation

Whether or not you think of Orlando Bloom as a major talent, “you can’t help but respect what the actor does with *Retaliation*,” said Peter Debruge in *Variety.com*. Playing an angry man tormented by his childhood experience of sexual abuse by a priest, Bloom delivers the performance of his career in this tough little British film that puts a twist on the typical revenge drama. “It’s a sobering inquiry into the ramifications of abuse—not just on the victim but insofar as they impact every relationship that follows.” (\$7) R

Most Wanted

In this solid adaptation of a “mind-boggling” true story, Josh Hartnett “has the talented but temperamental journalist thing down pat,” said Richard Roeper in the *Chicago Sun-*

Times. Hartnett plays a Canadian reporter determined to show that his country has framed a small-time drug dealer who’s facing life in a Thai prison, and Antoine Olivier Pilon proves a brilliant co-star. Despite “needlessly overcomplicated” plotting, it’s a powerful work. (\$7) R

Babysplitters

This indie farce about modern parenting is “often funnier than it has a right to be,” said Ty Burr in *The Boston Globe*. “The setup is ridiculous”: Two married couples with mixed feelings about raising children decide to have a baby together—dividing even the act of conception. But *Community*’s Danny Pudi and three other relatively unrecognized but talented co-stars get you rooting for the film even as it runs too long. “It succeeds just enough to make you want to see them get what they deserve.” (\$7) R

Waiting for the Barbarians

This lushly photographed adaptation of a J.M. Coetzee novel has quite a cast, said Boyd van Hoeij in *HollywoodReporter.com*. Mark Rylance plays the magistrate of a colonial outpost where the status quo is upended by the arrival of a cruel police colonel and his sidekick (Johnny Depp and Robert Pattinson). Unfortunately, “the characters are archetypes” and the location is left vague, making it hard for a viewer to emotionally connect. Rylance is so good, though, he “almost makes it work.” (\$6) Not rated

Streaming tips

Five great series, canceled too soon...

Hannibal

A series based on Thomas Harris' novels about Hannibal Lecter reimagined the *Silence of the Lambs* serial killer and ran for three seasons on NBC, where it probably didn't belong. Director Bryan Fuller pushed the boundaries in brilliant, avant-horror ways and won tremendous performances from Mads Mikkelsen as Lecter and Hugh Dancy as FBI profiler Will Graham. *Netflix*

Terriers

The rule-breaking crime procedural you've been looking for lasted just one season. Donal Logue and Michael Raymond-James co-star as an ex-cop and ex-crook who are best friends and new partners in a San Diego private investigation business. Imagine *Magnum P.I.* meets Roman Polanski's *Chinatown*: near-perfect neo-noir. *Hulu*

Sense8

The Wachowskis, creators of *The Matrix*, found sci-fi magic again with this visually arresting series about eight strangers who are suddenly able to communicate telepathically. The show ran for two seasons before fans clamored for closure and won a two-hour finale. *Netflix*

Carnivale

Daniel Knauf's cinematically dazzling series about carnival entertainers traveling through Dust Bowl America never found a big enough audience to ripen into the (expensive) epic he'd planned. Stream the two seasons, though, and you'll probably join the chorus clamoring for a *Deadwood*-style movie send-off. *HBO Max*

Great News

Tina Fey's hilarious cable news comedy probably came too soon after *30 Rock* to be appreciated for its own strengths—the jokes, the plotting, and a tremendous performance by stage and SCTV vet Andrea Martin. *Netflix*

The Week's guide to what's worth watching

The Swamp

"Drain the swamp!" was the refrain chanted by Donald Trump's supporters in 2016, and three Republican congressman—Matt Gaetz, Thomas Massie, and Ken Buck—adopted the anti-corruption rhetoric as their own. This documentary from the directors of *Get Me Roger Stone* follows the self-styled Capitol Hill mavericks as they loudly take aim at lobbying and special interests while bending to the realities of political fundraising. *Tuesday, Aug. 4, at 9 p.m., HBO*

Hitmen

Comic duo Mel Giedroyc and Sue Perkins, best known on these shores for their banter as one-time hosts of *The Great British Baking Show*, are suddenly into murder for hire. In their new half-hour sitcom, Mel and Sue play incompetent contract killers who take orders from a shady figure known as Mr. K. It's a very different line of work, but the appeal is still mostly the banter. *Available for streaming Thursday, Aug. 6, Peacock*

Upright

When a guy named Lucky is trying to drive a family piano across Australia, you know there are going to be complications. In this winning dramedy series, comedian and musician Tim Minchin has the good fortune to run into a 14-year-old runaway played by Milly Alcock, because the co-stars develop an easy chemistry as their characters do more growing up than they might have thought possible. *Available for streaming Thursday, Aug. 6, Sundance Now*

Surviving Jeffrey Epstein

A year after Jeffrey Epstein's death in a Manhattan jail, a new two-part documentary goes deeper into the disgraced financier's crimes. Eight women who say they were among his victims detail his pattern of luring in and sexually abusing underage girls and allegedly compelling them to sleep with other rich and famous men. Some of the women, but not all, shared their stories in a five-part Netflix series, and they add to the pile of evidence against Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell, his accused and recently arrested accomplice. *Sunday, Aug. 9, at 8 p.m., Lifetime*



Ola and Corfield, the outlaws of *We Hunt Together*

We Hunt Together

A stranger rescues a woman from an assault at a nightclub in London's Soho, and their alliance soon turns romantic, then murderous. In this richly detailed limited series from BBC Studios, an odd-couple pair of detectives chase an odd-couple pair of killers, matching wits and toying with viewers' sympathies. Fine performances all around, from Eve Myles, Babou Ceesay, Hermione Corfield, and Dipo Ola, help make the story fly. *Sunday, Aug. 9, at 10 p.m., Showtime*

Other highlights**Star Trek: Lower Decks**

Trekkie humor has a new outlet with this animated series created by *Rick and Morty* writer Mike McMahan. It follows the misadventures of low-ranking young crew members aboard the *USS Cerritos*. *Available for streaming Thursday, Aug. 6, CBS All Access*

Howard

A documentary tribute to Howard Ashman, lyricist for the animated Disney classics *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Little Mermaid*. *Available for streaming Friday, Aug. 7, Disney+*

Masterpiece: Endeavour

The detective series begins a new season with Inspector Morse traveling to Vienna while Inspector Thursday investigates a murder in Oxford. *Sunday, Aug. 9, at 9 p.m., PBS; check local listings*

Show of the week**An American Pickle**

Living the American dream can be quite the pickle. Just ask both characters played by Seth Rogen in this feature-length comedy based on a Simon Rich novella. The first, a bearded Eastern European ditchdigger named Herschel, arrived on these shores in 1919, landed work in Brooklyn, and promptly fell into a vat of pickles. The second, a computer programmer, is Herschel's well-compensated great-grandson. When Herschel is pulled from the vat alive, having been pickled for 100 years, the pair meet, setting up a comic clash of aspirations and values. *Available for streaming Thursday, Aug. 6, HBO Max*



Rogen as Herschel: Authentically artisanal

Chicken in hay: Rustic elegance and incomparable flavor

If there's one dish of Alain Passard's that I've always wanted to try, it's his so-called chicken in hay, says Camille Fourmont in *La Buvette: Recipes & Wine Notes From Paris* (Ten Speed Press). I've never had the luck to visit L'Arpège, Passard's celebrated Paris restaurant, when the dish was on the menu. So I eventually created my own. Besides "the artistry of the idea"—cooking and serving a chicken in what looks like a nest—the appeal lies in the flavor the hay imparts. Well, that and the aroma of dried grass that fills my home as the chicken cooks slowly on the stovetop. It reminds me of my childhood in the Loire Valley countryside.

Hay is easy to find in rural areas, and cooks who are citybound can buy it at a pet store that stocks it for rabbits and guinea pigs. "The hay is only for flavoring the chicken, not for eating," but do make sure that it's organic.

Recipe of the week

Chicken in hay

1 (3- to 4-lb) chicken, innards removed, trussed if possible
1½ tsp fine sea salt
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
5 to 6 handfuls organic hay (about 12 cups)
2 cups water



Guests will love the visual drama.

Flaky sea salt, such as Maldon, for serving

Take chicken out of refrigerator and pat it dry. Season all over with salt and pepper, including insides, then massage the entire chicken with olive oil. Let it sit at room

temperature for 1 hour so the chicken will cook more evenly.

Cover the bottom of a 6- to 7-quart cocotte or Dutch oven with about 3 inches of hay. Nestle chicken in center and arrange hay on sides so chicken looks as if it's sitting in a nest. Place cocotte over high heat for 1 to 2 minutes, then pour in water. It should start to steam. (If it doesn't, keep heating it.) Cover cocotte, turn heat down to medium-low, and cook for 30 minutes.

Remove lid and check bottom of cocotte to make sure there is still some water to prevent hay from burning. Cover again and continue to cook for 30 to 40 minutes more, or until chicken thigh is tender when pierced with a knife. At this point, hay will have turned from a light greenish yellow to a deeper yellow-brown, but it should never burn. If you are worried that the hay is close to scorching, turn heat to low and add ½ cup water. (The fewer times you remove the lid, the more evenly the chicken will cook, but a peek now and then to check progress is fine.)

Cut butcher's twine off finished chicken and discard. For the most impressive statement, serve chicken in its hay nest at the table, carving it directly in the cocotte as best you can. Pass the flaky salt. Serves 4 to 6.

Covid burnout: How to keep the meals coming every day



Typical 'building blocks'

"Months into quarantine, cooking has become the bane of my life," said **Adrienne So** in *Wired.com*. Cooking for four wasn't hard in normal times, when our family ate out now and then. These days I'm always wondering: "Why do people need to eat so often?" If you're fighting kitchen burnout, too, tackle the problem at the root—by using a meal-planning app such as Ends & Stems or Mealtime and by creating a way to keep a running grocery list. TikTok chef Vivian Aronson recommends thinking in terms of mealtime "building blocks." If you like tacos, always have red onions pickling in the fridge. For pasta, make and store pesto or tomato sauce. Instant ramen is a building block, too—if you dress it up with stir-fried garlic, tomato, and ground pork.

Prepping in one day for the whole week can help, said **Wendy Lopez** in *Self.com*. Chop up and store vegetables as soon as you get them home, then use them for the quick, balanced meals you toss together regularly from a few ingredients. Embrace a little repetition, said **Katherine Cusumano** in *The New York Times*. Keep a list of recipes you love, for example, and make at least one every week. Attitude is always the crucial ingredient, said **Jackie Mills** in *AllRecipes.com*. So, "no matter their age, get the other members of your house involved in mealtimes"—to help out but also to encourage mutual enthusiasm about cooking. As you cook, be accepting of your own misfires, and learn what your kitchen's telling you: Toss the plastic containers you don't use; donate the pots and utensils you never touch; and put specialty equipment in deep storage. "Visual clutter can translate to mental clutter," and no one needs that these days.

Wine: Budget California

"California is not usually fertile ground for good values," said Eric Asimov in *The New York Times*. But either because sales to restaurants are down or because producers have finally "taken up the challenge of making interesting, moderately priced wines," fine \$20 options are suddenly findable.

2018 Broc Cellars Love Red (\$20).

"With its lively fruit flavors," this thirst-quenching red blend is "perfect for an outdoor barbecue" and proof that Broc Cellars excels at tracking down well-farmed California grapes.

2017 Dirty & Rowdy Unfamiliar

Red (\$20). Petite sirah makes this a more structured, tannic red blend. Still, "it's fresh and fruity and would be just right with juicy burgers off the grill."

2018 Au Bon Climat Pinot Gris/Pinot Blanc (\$20). "Savory and sumptuous," this white blend should be "great with richer fish or chicken off the grill."



Pregnant and worried: What to know about Covid's risks

For women who are pregnant right now, “the future is an anxiety-stirring unknown,” said May-Ying Lam in *The Washington Post*. Women nearing their due dates began their pregnancies in “the other world”—one that promised baby showers and post-birth visits from the new grandparents. Instead, pregnant women are isolating from friends and family, preparing to give birth in hospitals that suddenly appear more hazardous, and fearing the results of the Covid tests they’re advised to take even as they arrive at the natal unit in labor. Those who test positive face “the difficult decision being made by pregnant women at hospitals across the country: whether to voluntarily separate from their newborns after birth.”

Because the coronavirus is relatively new, “the evidence about the added risks it imposes on a pregnancy is scant,” said Laurel Wamsley in *NPR.org*. In June, the CDC published a study showing that infected pregnant women appeared more likely to develop a severe case of Covid-19; 32 percent had been hospitalized. Even more worrisome was recent news from France of a baby, born this spring, that had apparently been infected with the virus in the womb. (Both mother and child have since recovered.) “How worried should expecting parents be? The answer



An expectant mother at a Massachusetts food pantry

and advice may continue to change as the evidence rolls in.” What is certain, though, is that pregnant women have to be fastidious about preventive measures—maintaining physical distance, wearing a mask, washing hands frequently—and everyone else in the home must be equally cautious. “My husband’s still going to the grocery store, and that’s pretty much the only place he goes,” says Carissa Helmer of Washington, D.C. “And the only place that I go is the doctor’s office.”

As a working Texas hospital pediatrician now in my ninth month of pregnancy, I have fielded many questions from new parents and other prospective parents, said Rachel Pearson in *The New Yorker*. I get the sense, though, that they don’t want all the knowledge about risks and precautions; “they want my blessing”—my assurance that all will be fine with their offspring. I refuse to promise good health. “Nobody knows what pregnancy will bring until the end, and I have seen it go all wrong at the very last minute.” Still, “my husband and I have this wonder coming to us: a birth. And, for me, a few weeks of respite, a chance to stop thinking about all the children and focus on one—this kicking creature, this small leviathan within, who stubbornly insists on life amid so much death.”

And if you're bored...



Don’t limit yourself to looking out the same old window every day, said Koh Ewe in *Vice.com*. At **Window-Swap.com**, you can enjoy the window views of various strangers scattered around the globe. Dreamed up during quarantine by a couple in Singapore, the curated site “quickly snowballed into a global collaboration,” with the hosts fielding up to 500 high-definition videos a day, all running 10 minutes each. “From the hazy streets of Istanbul to the crisp blue skies of Honolulu,” the glimpses of other places and other lives is surprisingly therapeutic. The inclusion of homeowners’ first names and ambient street and household noise adds a welcome touch of intimacy. “We’re all still strangers, but we’re strangers who have granted one another access to our daily window view.”

Lockdown season: Making the most of it

How to make indoor air safer

“Can something like an air filter really stop a seemingly unstoppable pandemic?” asked Kaleigh Rogers in *FiveThirtyEight.com*. The short answer to that question is no, not by itself. But as evidence grows that Covid-19 can spread via “aerosols”—lightweight particles that can hang in the air for hours—it’s worth knowing how air filtration can help. The virus is most easily spread by respiratory droplets that are too heavy to travel 6 feet, and the threat posed by the accumulation of aerosols is most efficiently reduced by opening windows. But when relying on an AC or HVAC system, you want to be using a filter with an efficiency rating of at least MERV 13—fine enough to trap most aerosols in the dangerous size range. Before upgrading, make sure your system can handle finer filters. And note that the CDC recommends a system that creates six air exchanges per hour, which might require adding stand-alone, in-room HEPA air cleaners.

Hobby swapping is definitely a thing

“Ever since quarantine began, I’ve taken to doing something you might call hobby swapping,” said Drew Schwartz in *Vice.com*. First I started collecting antique lighters, then I

fixated on playing video games. “I’ve since become obsessed with late-1980s Mercedes convertibles.” According to sociologist Robert Stebbins, hobby swapping is common among people who crave a long-term leisure pastime. Sooner or later, one hobby will stick, and the key is finding fulfillment in it. You do that by “pushing past dabbling”—learning to repair lighters or a Mercedes, say. In the end, either you find fulfillment through a hobby or the hobby swapping continues.

Don’t miss the Perseid meteor shower

Earth is currently hurtling through the dusty debris left by a distant comet, said Michael Bakich in *Astronomy*. That’s what causes the annual Perseid meteor shower, the mid-summer light show that “always ranks as the year’s best.” This year’s shower started in mid-July and will peak on the night of Aug. 11-12, before gradually petering out and ending on Aug. 27. Observers who stay up past midnight on Aug. 11 can expect to see 50 to 75 meteors per hour. The rising moon might reduce your count, “but if your sky is clear and you are patient, success is assured.” Consider pulling out a recliner chair or a blanket and some snacks. “You can watch for 10 minutes or 10 hours.”

Marketplace

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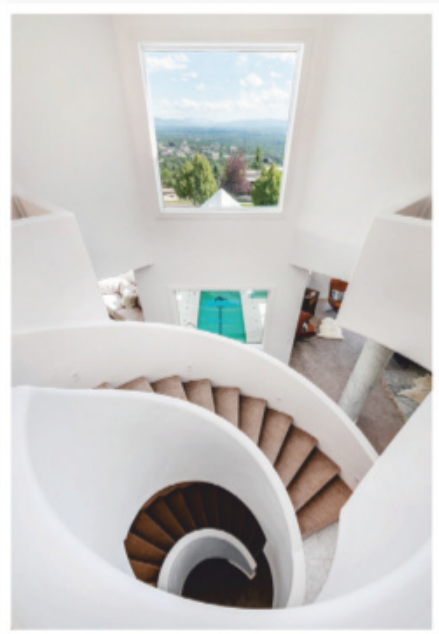
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This week: Homes in Utah

1 ► Park City This four-bedroom home sits on a 4.26-acre equestrian property overlooking Park City Resort. Sustainably built using steel beams and reclaimed timber, with solar panels and a high Energy Star rating, the house also features tile, stone, brick, and oak floors; a stone fireplace; a chef's kitchen; and a sauna. Outside are three covered decks with mountain and valley views, patios, landscaping, and a three-car garage. \$3,495,000. Kevin Crockett and Lana Harris, Coldwell Banker Realty, (435) 602-4800



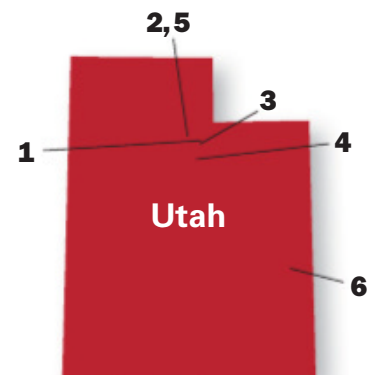
2 ◀ Salt Lake City Set in the Arlington Hills, this five-bedroom home has 360-degree views of downtown and Mount Olympus. The 1994 house, remodeled in 2014, has a spiral central staircase, a skylight, over-size windows, marble fireplaces, a master suite with balcony, a finished basement with kitchen, and an indoor lap pool. On the half-acre lot are lawns, mature plantings, fountains, and a circular driveway. \$1,895,000. Cherie Major, Windermere Real Estate/Luxury Portfolio International, (801) 485-3151

3 ► Midway From a mountainside bordering Wasatch State Park, this four-bedroom home overlooks the Provo River, Heber Valley, and Mount Timpanogos. The house features 150-year-old hardwood floors, a great room with 25-foot-high stone fireplace, a wine cellar, and a master suite with spa bathroom and sauna. The 1.5-acre property includes automated lighting, a generator, and a swimming pool with waterfalls and a fire feature. \$2,650,000. Court Klekas, Engel & Völkers Park City, (435) 640-5080





4 ► Sundance Part of Sundance's only gated community, this five-bedroom home offers easy access to skiing, hiking, and biking. The remodeled interior includes a great room with a stone fireplace, a game room with reclaimed-wood walls, and a chef's kitchen leading out to a deck with a hot tub. The 0.63-acre wooded lot features a heated driveway and mountain views; an adjoining lot is also for sale. \$1,980,000. Paul Benson, Engel & Völkers Park City, (435) 640-7441



5 ◀ Salt Lake City Perched in the foothills of Ensign Downs, this 1957 four-bedroom home has panoramic mountain and valley views. The ranch-style house has been extensively renovated; details include sliding glass doors, a wet bar, a living room with unique fireplace, and a primary suite with walk-in closet and dual bathroom. The fenced quarter-acre lot has lawns, a large patio, and climate-appropriate minimalist landscaping. \$1,199,000. Brian Tripoli, City Home Collective, (801) 809-9804



6 ► Moab This 1946 two-bedroom log-and-stone cabin looks out on the La Sal Mountains and Moab Rim. Completely reconstructed, it features interior masonry of Colorado Plateau stone and fossils, oversize windows, a new vaulted living-room ceiling, updated kitchen and bathroom, and an added sunroom and loft area. The property, in Pack Creek Ranch, includes access to a community pool, hot tub, and sauna, historic outbuildings, and pastures. \$445,000. Lenore Beeson, Byrd & Co. Real Estate, (435) 260-2135



Steal of the week

The news at a glance

The bottom line

■ Tesla reported a profit of \$104 million on revenue of \$6 billion. Its fourth consecutive profit qualifies the soaring electric carmaker for inclusion in the S&P 500 index. *CNBC.com*

■ Volkswagen drivers in the U.S. have received more than \$9.8 billion in settlements since the company agreed in 2015 to buy back or repair 550,000 polluting diesel vehicles. More than 86 percent of owners who completed claims chose to return their car. *Reuters*



■ Topps Now baseball cards featuring an image of infectious-disease specialist Anthony Fauci throwing the first

pitch at baseball's season-opening game sold a record 51,512 copies in 24 hours at a price of \$9.99 each. *Sportico.com*

■ Kodak won a \$765 million loan from the federal government to make ingredients used in generic drugs to fight coronavirus. The company declared bankruptcy in 2012, selling off its patents and its photography businesses. *Financial Times*

■ The U.S. dollar fell to a two-year low this week against a basket of foreign currencies. It now trades at \$1.17 against the Euro. Demand has soared for the currencies of Australia and Norway, which have minimized coronavirus deaths. *Reuters*

■ Global remittances from migrant workers to their families abroad are expected to decline by 19.7 percent this year to \$445 billion, the most severe contraction in history. *The New York Times*

Stimulus: Deal falters over unemployment aid

Senate Republicans unveiled a \$1 trillion coronavirus stimulus package this week with the White House's "seal of approval," said Alayna Treene and Marisa Fernandez in *Axios.com*, but even GOP lawmakers blasted the process as "confusing" and "messy." The end proposal, called the HEALS Act, came up far short of meeting demands from Democrats before several critical benefits expire. Republicans want to extend unemployment insurance, "but at 70 percent of an individual's lost wages" or a flat \$200 per week until states can catch up on processing. The aid is far less than that envisioned in the \$3 trillion bill passed by the House and backed by Democrats.



McConnell: Pushing Americans back to work

This legislation "reads like it was brought to us by the lobby at Big Covid," said Jordan Weissmann in *Slate.com*. Contrary to its name, the HEALS Act's biggest aim is to "herd people back to work." The proposal slashes unemployment benefits, gives companies liability protections, and even encourages people to dine out by "letting companies fully expense business meals." The aim seems to be to have people get back to work as if there were no epidemic. We know where that leads, but the GOP's governing philosophy is "We can keep doing the same thing over and over hoping for different results."

Big Tech: Tech CEOs face House antitrust panel

CEOs of four of the top tech giants faced questions from lawmakers in a historic antitrust hearing, said David McCabe and Cecilia Kang in *The New York Times*. Democrats on the House Antitrust Committee "dug into the issue of competition" on Google's search engine and Apple's App Store. Republicans focused on charges that Facebook and Google suppressed conservative views. Amazon's Jeff Bezos largely avoided scrutiny until late in the hearing and emerged largely unscathed from what was expected to be a severe grilling.

Fed: Trump pick faces opposition

Sen. Susan Collins of Maine became the second Republican to say she would vote against Judy Shelton's nomination to the Federal Reserve Board, said Rachel Siegel in *The Washington Post*. Collins joined Sen. Mitt Romney (R-Utah) this week in expressing concerns about Shelton, "who is known for her advocacy for a return to the gold standard." To be confirmed, Shelton can't afford to lose more than three Republicans. The Fed announced no policy changes this week after its third scheduled meeting since the pandemic and said it will extend its emergency lending programs through the end of 2020.

Pharma: Drug execs skip White House parley

A White House meeting with top pharmaceutical executives this week was canceled after President Trump signed a series of executive orders aimed at lowering drug prices, said Sarah Oweremohle in *Politico.com*. The meeting was intended to allow drugmakers to respond to a proposed rule that would lower "Medicare payments for certain medicines" by linking them to prices paid abroad. Trump said he would delay the order and give the industry "a month to present a better option."

Hedge funds: Turmoil at Bridgewater

The world's largest hedge fund, Bridgewater Associates, laid off dozens of employees last week amid the firm's "toughest period in years," said Juliet Chung in *The Wall Street Journal*. Meanwhile, Bridgewater's former co-CEO, Eileen Murray, is suing the company, which holds \$138 billion in assets, "alleging Bridgewater is withholding an estimated \$20 million to \$100 million in deferred compensation" because she disclosed the existence of a gender-discrimination dispute. Bridgewater is known for an unorthodox management culture that insists on "radical transparency," which makes the dispute unusual. The firm's flagship fund, Pure Alpha, was down 13.6 percent for the year through June.

Goldman chief caught in DJ beef

DJ D-Sol, aka David Solomon, CEO of Goldman Sachs, is facing fierce criticism for DJing a concert that's now under investigation by New York state's health authorities, said Amanda Gordon in *Bloomberg.com*. The charity event last weekend was billed as the "'Safe & Sound' Drive-in Concert," where roughly 2,000 attendees—including the Winklevoss twins—could "enjoy music by their cars and in designated spots" on a large open field. Guests paid as much as \$25,000 for each parking spot. But videos showed groups of maskless partiers clustering at the stage. Solomon, the Goldman Sachs chief who has been moonlighting as a DJ for years, presented his set amid plumes of smoke that "went up in front of the stage as the sky turned pink and orange." Awkwardly, the event came shortly after Goldman announced it would pay \$3.9 billion to Malaysia to settle charges related to a bribery scandal.

Investing: A quicker path to the public markets

Blank-check companies are having a moment, said **Brian Cheung** in *Yahoo.com*. These specialized dealmakers — known as special-purpose acquisition companies, or SPACs—serve only one purpose: raising money to buy a startup to take public. Indeed, the SPAC itself is a publicly listed shell company with no operations. Once it gets enough institutional investors on board to acquire a target company, the SPAC takes its spot on the exchange. For target firms, SPACs “generally offer a simpler path” to the market. The SPAC pays a fixed price for shares, avoiding the uncertainty of an initial public offering. Electric-truck maker Nikola, sports gambling company DraftKings, and Richard Branson’s Virgin Galactic have all gone the SPAC route and seen their share prices soar. SPAC investors don’t get a say in where their money is aimed—hence the “blank check” nickname—so the companies typically “tout the experience of their management group as part of the value proposition.” It seems to be working: Last week, billionaire investor Bill Ackman raised a record \$4 billion for his new SPAC, Pershing Square Tontine Holdings.

SPACs have some unfortunate connotations, said **Alexander Osipovich** in *The Wall Street Journal*. They had a run in the 1980s as well but were “often associated with penny-stock frauds” that bilked investors—many of them older retirees—out



Branson’s Virgin Galactic went public in a SPAC deal.

of roughly \$2 billion. Since then, laws and regulations have “helped clean up the sector.” Still, getting bought by a SPAC is an expensive way to go public, said **Matt Levine** in *Bloomberg.com*. SPACs pass on the substantial fees they pay to investment banks to raise money, which are often bigger than the fees for a traditional IPO. And a SPAC “typically gives its sponsor—the famous investor or operator who runs the SPAC and finds a target company to take public—20 percent of its stock virtually for free.”

Some market observers wonder if all the SPAC enthusiasm “will end in tears,” said **Crystal Kim**, also in *Bloomberg.com*. The success of companies like Virgin Galactic and DraftKings has attracted retail investors hunting for “the next Tesla” and bypassing “what they perceive as the establishment.” This has led to a lot of “blind faith” being placed in SPACs that have merged with less familiar names, like BurgerFi International, a fast-casual burger chain, and Ucommune, China’s version of WeWork. In reality, shares in the 45 blank-check companies that have completed acquisitions this year have declined by a median of 12 percent, said **Tomi Kilgore** in *MarketWatch.com*. The involvement of Ackman, known for his huge bet on a market rebound earlier this year, is a sign “the space has started maturing,” but it remains to be seen whether he can find a “mature” startup to justify all that investor cash.

What the experts say

Investing pros study amateur trades

“A site that tracks retail trading activity on Robinhood has attracted the attention of Wall Street,” said Sonali Basak and Sarah Ponczek in *Bloomberg.com*. Two-year-old Robintrack.net “shows how many accounts own any given stock” on the online brokerage app, which has surged in popularity among day traders during the pandemic. Robintrack’s stats “provide real-time insights into where amateur stock pickers are sending their money.” That’s useful for “professionals who build fancy models to make their own bets.” Just how much influence day traders have on the market, though, is uncertain; Robintrack founder Casey Primozic cautions that the data from amateurs won’t “create a killer strategy on its own.”

No rise in poverty despite pandemic

The coronavirus recession has had a surprising effect on the poverty rate, said *The Economist*. Normally, a downturn equals rising unemployment and rising poverty: “The recession of 2007–09 prompted the share of Americans classified as poor to jump from 12 percent to 17 percent.” And those unemployment figures a decade ago “pale in comparison” with what we are seeing now. However, an analysis from Goldman Sachs shows household income is

still rising at about 4 percent a year, and a new paper from economists at the Universities of Chicago and Notre Dame suggests poverty “may actually have fallen a bit in April and May.” How? The \$1,200 stimulus checks provided by Congress in April kept household income in line with pre-pandemic levels. And the \$600 per week extended unemployment benefits have actually boosted pay for many workers. But keeping incomes stable is “a fragile accomplishment” that could easily be undone in the second half of the year.

Record highs in gold may not last

The price of gold is surging to record highs, said Joe Wallace in *The Wall Street Journal*. Futures contracts for delivering gold in August hit more than \$1,940 a troy ounce this week, topping a previous intraday record set in September 2011. Prices are up roughly 27 percent for the year. A “gloomy outlook for the economy, a decline in interest rates, rising tensions between the United States and China, and the dollar’s depreciation” have fueled investors’ interest in so-called haven assets. However, lockdowns have curtailed jewelry purchases, particularly in China and India, and if investors’ demand wanes, “prices could fall without physical consumption to act as a cushion.”

Charity of the week

Founded in 1970, the **Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press** (rcfp.org)



fights to protect the First Amendment rights of news organizations, reporters, editors, filmmakers, and freelance journalists with a range of legal services. The charity gives pro bono legal representation; files “friend of the court” briefs in state, federal, and Supreme Court cases; provides free pre-publication legal services to independent journalists and filmmakers; and helps local reporters gain access to public records. In addition, RCFP operates a legal defense and Freedom of Information Act hotline so journalists can get legal advice on the spot to protect their access and ability to report on events of national importance—including recent protests during which reporters have been attacked by both police and demonstrators.

Each charity we feature has earned a four-star overall rating from Charity Navigator, which rates not-for-profit organizations on the strength of their finances, their governance practices, and the transparency of their operations. Four stars is the group’s highest rating.

Housing: Buyers bid higher as renters face eviction

This summer's housing market is split into two alternate realities, said **Heather Long** in *The Washington Post*. Realtors' cellphones have been "ringing with eager buyers" looking to flee urban areas for the suburbs while mortgage interest rates are at record lows. One house on the market outside Harrisburg, Pa., "received 26 offers the initial weekend it was for sale." For renters, on the other hand, the outlook is grim. A federal eviction moratorium expired last week, meaning that many tenants could have only 30 days to pony up what they owe landlords or get kicked to the curb. This week, Congress signaled it would extend the moratorium to give renters more breathing room while debating whether to extend other aid, such as unemployment benefits and stimulus checks—some of "the few lifelines renters had during the pandemic."



As moratoriums end, evictions appear inevitable.

The eviction wave has already started, said **Will Parker** in *The Wall Street Journal*. The national moratorium only covered tenants in buildings with federally backed mortgages. States passed their own eviction limits, but some, such as Texas, have already let them expire. In a sign of things to come, attorneys in Houston are seeing "long lines at courthouses, sometimes people standing shoulder to shoulder" awaiting eviction hearings. "Stuck between tenants who can't, or simply won't, pay up and banks that still expect mortgage payments every month," landlords are also feeling the squeeze, said **Tim Logan** in *The Boston Globe*. In Massachusetts, a fifth of the landlords say "they don't know how they will pay their bills this year." That will only get worse if the state extends its eviction ban without help for property owners.

There's a simple reason for this recession's "uneven" effect on the housing market, said **Joy Wiltermuth** in *MarketWatch.com*. The median income for homebuyers today is \$93,000, while renters are substantially poorer and "householders earning less than \$35,000 a year have been hit hardest by lost wages since early May." Just don't assume wealthier homeowners are bulletproof, said **Keith Jurow**, also in *MarketWatch.com*. Since 2016, "mortgages offered to high-income borrowers who could afford the monthly payments seemed the least risky of all." Origination of jumbo loans—mortgages that are too big to be backed by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac—skyrocketed. But now many high-income borrowers are in trouble, too. As of mid-June, "11.8 percent of all jumbo loans were in forbearance"—twice as many as in April, and a higher share than for standard mortgages.

"Perhaps this is all starting to sound like a redux of the mid-2000s housing crisis," said **Derek Thompson** in *The Atlantic*. "It's not." In many ways, it is the opposite. Back then, "foreclosures soared" and single-family homes stood empty in the suburbs. Now there is an undersupply of suburban housing and a hot market in new construction. The problem today is in the cities, where the pandemic has accelerated a crisis of affordability. "Without income, renters can't pay rent and utilities. Without monthly payments, landlords and other companies can't make mortgages and bond payments." Housing costs in cities have been approaching a crisis for years; thanks to the pandemic, that crisis is here, and "dangerously close to spiraling out of control."

The Fed is no place for crackpots

Bruce Bartlett
The New Republic

If you can imagine a college chemistry department "giving tenure to an alchemist," then you have a pretty good idea of what the Senate is up against when it considers the president's latest pick for the Federal Reserve board, said **Bruce Bartlett**. Goldbugs like **Judy Shelton** distrust "fiat money," and insist that if we don't fix the price of the dollar in gold bullion—a system we effectively abandoned in 1933—hyperinflation will make our money worthless. It doesn't matter to goldbugs that using the price of gold "to guide monetary policy would whipsaw the U.S. economy," or that the U.S. has never experienced anything close to hyperinflation.

Goldbugs are interested not in rational arguments but in conspiracy theories. The congressman **Ron Paul** once held hearings "about reports that the gold in Fort Knox had been secretly shipped out and sold." Another goldbug congressman insisted on checking for himself, and even after seeing it still questioned whether "the vault he saw was the only one with actual gold in it." The economist **Milton Friedman**, revered by conservatives, said that the gold standard was "basically a crackpot idea." The last thing we need "during a mounting economic crisis" is to give one of its die-hard advocates a prestigious platform.

Intel's epic failure bodes ill for the U.S.

Ian King
Bloomberg.com

"Intel's decision to consider outsourcing manufacturing heralds the end of an era," said **Ian King**. For 30 years, the California-based company's "main competitive advantage" was its ability to marry top-notch design with cutting-edge factories in Oregon, Arizona, and New Mexico. As other U.S. chip fabs shuttered or moved their plants overseas, Intel was "one of the last bastions of U.S. technology leadership." But chief executive **Bob Swan** acknowledged last week that the strategy Intel has pursued for decades "is in tatters." The recent breakup with Apple after 15 years of partnership was one sign of how far Intel has fallen behind its rivals. Now Intel

has been forced to admit that the next iteration of its technology, 7-nanometer chips, will be delayed by over a year. "Whatever credibility they had is out the window," one analyst said. Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co., a foundry that produces chips for Apple, Qualcomm, Huawei, and others, has already leaped years beyond Intel's capability to 5-nanometer production. Now Intel may be forced to turn to TSMC to build its own designs. It's a massive blow to U.S. chip production at a time when the manufacturing of semiconductors is seen as a matter of national security. And it "may mean Intel never catches up again."

The Golden Age star who bucked the Hollywood system

Olivia de Havilland
1916–2020

Olivia de Havilland was among the brightest stars of Hollywood's Golden Age, and one who refused to be bound by its strictures. She came to prominence as an ingenue appearing opposite Errol Flynn in a string of swashbucklers, most notably as Maid Marian in *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938). But thirsting for more substantial fare, she lobbied for what would become her most celebrated role, playing Scarlett O'Hara's kindly sister-in-law Melanie in the 1939 Civil War epic *Gone With the Wind*. Underwhelmed by the formulaic parts Warner Bros. offered in its wake, she pushed back with a steeliness that belied her 5-foot-3 stature and demure screen presence. De Havilland rejected numerous roles and ultimately won a landmark lawsuit, over a contract extension. That victory helped weaken the studio system, under which film studios held tight control over actors' careers. Oscar-winning roles followed: an unwed mother forced to give up her infant son in *To Each His Own* (1946) and a repressed woman courted by a gold digger in *The Heiress* (1949). "I believed in following Bette Davis' example," she said in 1988. "She didn't care whether she looked good or bad. She just wanted to play complex, interesting, fascinating parts, a variety of human experience."

De Havilland "was born in Tokyo to British parents," said *The Washington Post*. Her father ran a patent-law firm, her mother "was a choral singer and actress in amateur stage shows." When her parents divorced, de Havilland's mother moved to Northern California with her two young daughters and was remarried, to "a prosperous businessman and cruel disciplinarian." His last name, Fontaine, would be adopted by de Havilland's sister Joan, likewise



a future Hollywood star. Young Olivia "escaped from family tensions through acting," winning "strong reviews in community theater productions."

She thought she'd become a teacher, said the *Los Angeles Times*, but "her life took a detour." An appearance in a local Shakespeare production led de Havilland to be cast as Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Hollywood Bowl. Sitting in the audience one night, Warner Bros. studio chief Jack Warner saw "the makings of a star" and signed the 18-year-old actress to a seven-year deal. She soon appeared with Flynn in the 1935 pirate film *Captain Blood*, which established the pair as "highly bankable assets," said *The Times* (U.K.). But it was in *Gone With the Wind* that her "career was made."

De Havilland's "off-screen drama tantalized gossip columnists for decades," said *The Wall Street Journal*. That was due partly to a lifelong, bitter rivalry with her famous sister—de Havilland referred to Fontaine as "Dragon Lady"—but also to flings with John Huston, Jimmy Stewart, and Howard Hughes. After marrying her second husband, the editor of *Paris Match*, in 1955, she settled in Paris and became "a rather grand French housewife," said *The Daily Telegraph* (U.K.). Her last major film role came in 1964; "subsequently there were guest roles in various films and television plays." Into her 90s, she could be seen biking around the French capital and credited her preternatural youthfulness to daily champagne drinking. The decline of her acting career yielded no "visible regrets." "One can't be on top all the time," de Havilland said. "It isn't natural."

The excitable, cantankerous host who livened up morning TV

Regis Philbin
1931–2020

Regis Philbin greeted millions of Americans every weekday morning for 33 years, usually with a new indignity to vent about: horrible traffic, the Mets, those damned computers. His griping proved endearing, even if an exasperated Kathie Lee Gifford had to cut him off with "Oh, Reege." As co-host of ABC's *Live*, beginning with Gifford in 1988, and later with Kelly Ripa, Philbin thrived in the unscripted, unrehearsed format, especially the first 20 minutes of riffing and playful barb trading. He also hosted ABC's smash hit game show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* from 1999 to 2002, sending shock waves of self-doubt with his catchphrase "Is that your final answer?" By the time he retired from *Live* in 2011, Philbin had logged nearly 17,000 hours in front of TV cameras—a Guinness World Record. "Every day, you see the record shattered, pal," Philbin would tell viewers. "One more hour!"

Born to Italian-Irish parents in the Bronx, N.Y., he was named Regis "for the Roman Catholic boys' high school his dad attended," said the Associated Press. Philbin earned a degree in sociology at the University of Notre Dame, then spent two years in the Navy as a supply officer. "On his last day in the service," said *NPR.org*, Philbin was asked by a major in the Marines what he wanted to do with the rest of his life. "I told him, 'What I'd like to do is go into television, but I don't know if I have any talent,'" he later recalled. The major barked that he should follow his dreams anyway, and Philbin returned to New York to work as an NBC



page. Six weeks later he was hired as a stagehand in Los Angeles and climbed the TV ranks, landing his own local program, *The Regis Philbin Show*, in 1964. It was canceled after eight episodes.

"His first prolonged national exposure" came in 1967, said the *Los Angeles Times*, when ABC hired Philbin as announcer and sidekick on *The Joey Bishop Show*. That went off air two years later, and after bouncing around other shows, Philbin returned to New York in 1983 to co-host ABC's local morning show. His big break came in 1985, when Kathie Lee, the soon-to-be wife of NFL legend Frank Gifford, joined as co-host, leading to national syndication. Up against heavily produced, gossip talk shows, *Live* focused on "smaller things" like "visits from your mother-in-law or the kids bringing home stray cats," Philbin said in 1988. "People relate to that."

Celebrities also stopped by, said *The New York Times*, and Philbin would dance with the Chippendales or catch passes from Joe Namath. Despite his fame, Philbin had to lobby for the *Millionaire* gig. On the *Late Show*—where he was David Letterman's most frequent guest—Philbin pledged that if he got the job, "I am going to resurrect ABC!" He did his bit: The British game-show import generated \$1 billion over its first two years and "an astonishing 30 million viewers tuned in three nights in a week." At age 80, Philbin finally retired from *Live*. "There are times when I really miss it," he said of hosting. "I just figured it was time to let go."

The great American canned corn robbery

Teams of thieves cruise U.S. highways, brazenly grabbing entire truck trailers full of goods, said Dylan Taylor-Lehman in Narratively.com. Just about anything that can be trucked can be stolen and sold.

ON MAY 11, 2013, a semi cab made its way up Interstate 555 from Memphis, northwest to Jonesboro, Ark. The man driving—a career trucker from Memphis—was accompanied by his nephew, and the pair were bobtailing, meaning their truck wasn't pulling a trailer. Drivers often have to travel between warehouses and shipping facilities to pick up a new load, and these two men were indeed in search of new cargo to haul. Only in this case, they weren't looking to do it legally. They were cruising the truck stops along I-555 for unattended trailers to pick up and steal.



A trailer-load of stolen cans is easy to sell—and your profit is 100 percent.

Truckers sometimes leave their trailers at truck stops or even in parking lots in order to visit a mechanic or drive the cab home for the weekend. So the men knew it was only a matter of time before they came across an unattached trailer, overlooked in the bustle of a busy truck stop. The pair's combined experience came in handy, as either one of them could hook up to a trailer, crank up the landing gear and connect a few hoses, then drive right off in a matter of minutes.

At around 5:40 p.m., the men found what they were looking for. A 52-foot Wabash trailer, sitting in the parking lot of the Snappy Mart Truck Stop in West Plains, Mo. The nephew dropped out of the cab and ran over to the trailer, directing as his uncle backed up. They maneuvered the large, U-shaped coupling on the back of the tractor under the trailer's enormous kingpin, which clanked into place and locked automatically. The nephew hopped up and walked through the space between the tractor and the trailer to connect a few hoses and cables. The two men drove off with the errant trailer, itself worth \$7,500 even empty, and hightailed it with whatever cargo was inside, intensely vigilant but giddy like kids at a criminal Christmas.

They drove up through Chicago and into Indiana before cutting northward into Michigan in the early morning of May 12. The distance was substantial but not especially noteworthy for long-haul truckers who crisscross the U.S. highway system on a weekly basis. The pair already had

buyers set up in obscure warehouse locales, people who knew how to efficiently get rid of bulk goods. The men would get a cut of the proceeds.

As they would later find out, their prize haul was \$30,000 worth of Green Giant canned corn, headed from a food-processing facility in Montgomery, Minn., to a food pantry in Little Rock, Ark. The 40,000 cans of corn weighed many thousands of pounds. Would they have gone through with the theft had they known what the trailer contained? Surprisingly enough, yes. A trailer full of canned corn isn't a bust of a heist. Cheap food disappears easily into mom-and-pop shops, swap meets, and over the internet, and it is virtually untraceable once it's gone.

"If you have enough of something and you can sell it for cheap enough, you can make it disappear very quickly, and your profit is 100 percent," said Manteca Police Department Sgt. Joe Ahuna, who has worked on cargo theft cases in California's Central Valley region.

In fact, some of the highest-value and thus most-targeted loads in recent years have been snack nuts. When a drought greatly diminished the supply of nuts, thereby raising the demand for them, seasoned truck thieves became more interested in going after nuts than they were big-ticket electronics or medicine. Nut theft reached a peak in early 2015, with 31 nut heists costing carriers more than \$5 million.

"How are you to track individual nuts?"

said Sgt. Shawna Pacheco, a supervisor in the California Highway Patrol's Golden Gate Investigative Services unit and a member of its Cargo Theft Interdiction Program. "When those nuts get transported to a warehouse where they are processed—some are legal and some are stolen—but all are crushed and bagged, so good luck telling the difference." Similar networks of licit and illicit buyers are relied on to fence everything from lunch meat to designer clothes, and the same strategy is at play today in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic.

Sheriffs in North Carolina recently tracked down a stolen semi carrying 18,000 pounds of toilet paper.

THE TWO TRUCK thieves, Earl Stanley Nunn and his nephew, Michael Lee Sherley, were no slouches when it came to ripping off trucks. The crew they were working with had previously conducted similar operations in more than a dozen states, spreading the felonies across countless jurisdictions. What they didn't know was that they were already being carefully tracked by the FBI's Memphis Cargo Theft Task Force, which had placed a GPS tracking device on Nunn's tractor.

The canned corn thieves made their way across Michigan on Interstate 94. Their route took them across Jackson County in the southeastern part of Michigan's mitten. As they drove, the marshals contacted the Michigan Department of State Police's Southwest Commercial Auto Recovery (SCAR) Unit to let them know they had a stolen load coming their way.

The SCAR team was already aware of Nunn, whom authorities had been keeping an eye on since 2009. But they'd ramped up surveillance a year earlier, after his son Roderick had been arrested for stealing a trailer full of 39,000 pounds of Wrigley's gum, valued at \$175,000, from a shipping facility and attempting to drive it to Detroit, a heist that led to a 15-minute chase with a Michigan State Police officer and culminated in Roderick running from the cab and his co-conspirator attempting

to hide in a field. The younger Nunn had also been convicted of bank robbery in 2002 and of stealing \$92,000 worth of sugar and powdered lemonade mix in 2008.

Nunn and Sherley didn't hear the siren at first; it only intruded on their consciousness when they saw the emergency lights of a Michigan State Police vehicle in their rearview mirrors. Hoping he could talk his way out of the stop, Nunn slowed down and coasted onto the shoulder, stopping right between mile markers 141 and 142. It was 7 in the morning, and they were approximately 80 miles from their presumed destination in Detroit.

The officer took his time exiting his vehicle, taking notes but deliberately delaying contact to intimidate the drivers. He ambled up to the cab and asked the driver and passenger to get out. The officer asked Nunn where he got the trailer. "We picked it up just outside of Gary, Ind.," Nunn said. "A guy named Charlie told us to grab it from the Blue Ox truck stop." He claimed they were to be paid \$1,000 for the trip, that there was no paperwork associated with the load, and that was all he knew.

The arrest was uneventful. Nunn and Sherley were taken to Jackson, Mich., and questioned again by detectives. Sherley said he'd just been along for the ride, while Nunn said he was starting to worry a bit about his own safety, since the load hadn't yet been delivered to Charlie. The detectives listened with inscrutable expressions before they revealed that they had been tracking Nunn's tractor across four states. They knew Charlie wasn't real, as they'd been watching Nunn for almost a year, including every step of his most recent escape.

The trailer was towed to a nearby storage facility in Michigan, and the agents worked on getting the load back to its intended recipient. A manager with the Missouri-based shipping company who organized the delivery was stunned after speaking to authorities. She hadn't even known that the load was missing, and now she was being told it had been recovered more than 700 miles away.

WHETHER IT'S LOADS of canned corn or construction materials or 25,000 cellphones, truck thievery is surprisingly common. CargoNet, an industry group that tracks cargo theft, tallied roughly 2,600 truck thefts in 2019, with the average value of a trailer theft at around \$148,000. Truck hijacking has, of course, been going on as long as there have been trucks—and before that, train and stagecoach robberies emerged as an indispensable part of American folklore. The

phenomenon became particularly widespread during Prohibition, when gangsters would jack trucks to fund booze-running operations and other crimes.

Today, outright hijacking of trucks is fairly rare in the United States, and when it does happen, it doesn't require a *Fast & Furious*-style tech-filled sports car hanging from a helicopter. Most important is the element of surprise—overwhelm the driver, toss him out of the vehicle, and drive off—the same now as it was in the 1930s. But most truck thieves avoid the muss and fuss of violence or kidnapping, preferring instead to take an unattended trailer.



Some thieves fake papers to pick up a trailer.

Thieves look for victims on internet hauling boards (such as Truckstop.com), where truckers often piece together deliveries for different companies—one on the way to a destination, a different one on the way back. Thieves troll these boards and can home in on a shipment that looks promising. The job boards don't mention any specifics about a haul, sales and logistics specialist Arthur Schwarzer said, but an enterprising thief likely knows how to call a shipper and obtain specifics without raising any suspicions. They can use this information and doctored paperwork to pick up a load before anyone is the wiser.

Alternately, the thieves sometimes pretend to be the truck crew legitimately scheduled to pick up the load and simply beat the real drivers to the punch. A shipment's bill of lading—a critical piece of paperwork for any legitimate delivery, describing the weight, contents, and tracking number of a shipment—can be faked with information obtained by skilled social engineers.

But the most common method of jacking a truck is generally the most banal: Thieves know where to look for unattended trailers. At truck stops, it's open season, with trailers galore for the taking, especially if you've got a seasoned crew. In recent years, a 12-member Louisville-based outfit operated a complex cargo-thievery

network across more than 10 states. They would conduct surveillance on facilities shipping high-value goods, then follow departing trucks until they stopped for gas, at which time the trailer would be stolen, driven miles away, hooked up to a different tractor, and taken back to Louisville to be sold off.

The group took everything from cigarettes to appliances to baby formula, as well as a load of thousands of cellphones, a single shipment valued at almost \$12 million. All told, the group stole \$30 million worth of cargo from 2012 to 2015, but the high-value cellphone heist proved to be their undoing. An FBI-led task force "injected false intel" into the group in the form of another shipment of cellphones leaving Louisville. "We knew they were going to be watching the facility in Louisville," said FBI Special Agent Paul Meyer. "They took the bait. We watched them steal the load, and then we took them down." In May 2018, the men were sentenced to between one and 12½ years for their crimes.

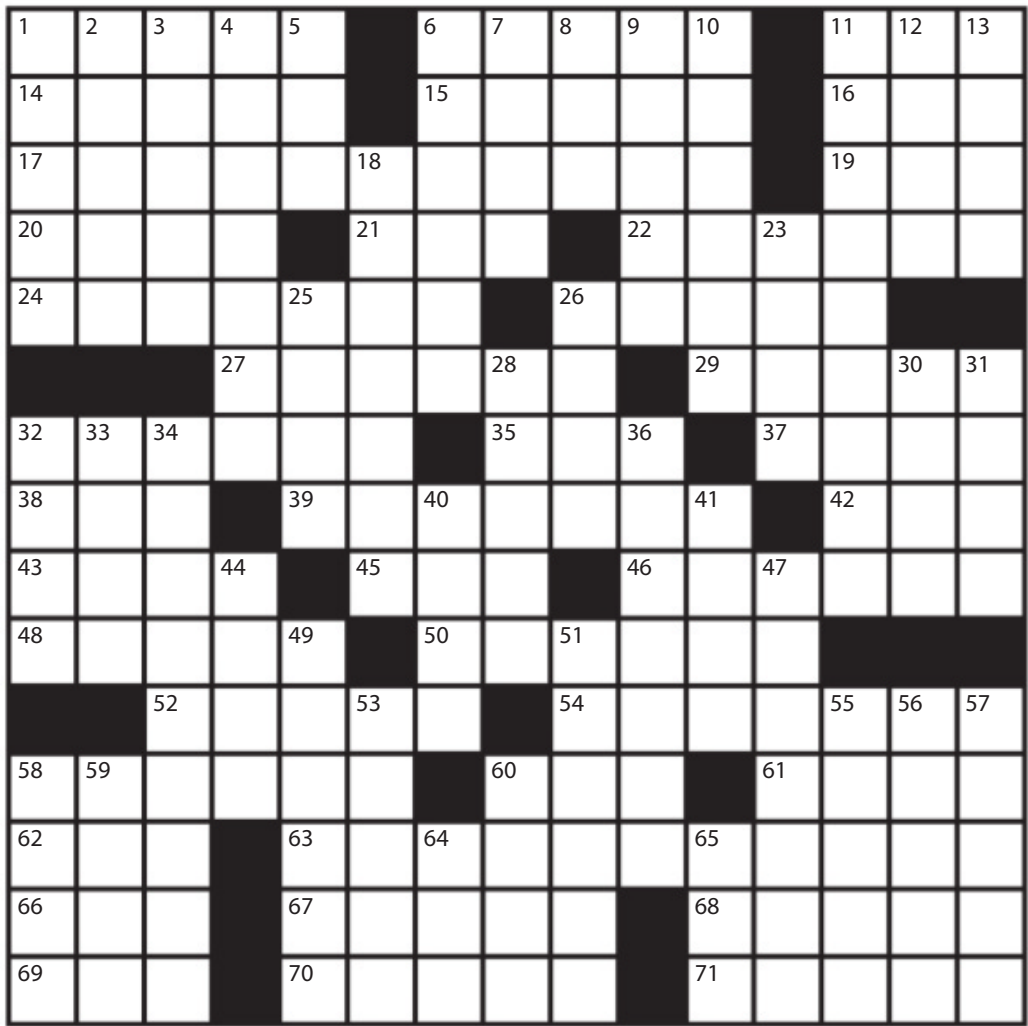
Earl Stanley Nunn's operations were modest in comparison, but that didn't mean the law wouldn't come down on him with equivalent force. Nunn appeared in court in Missouri in September 2014. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison, the maximum possible, and ordered to pay more than \$3.5 million in restitution to the businesses he was convicted of ripping off. His trucking business was dismantled, and any salvageable assets, such as the truck used in the heist, were seized. His nephew, Michael Lee Sherley, got 4½ years for the corn theft and for breaking his parole on an unrelated prior conviction. He was released in 2017.

Roderick Nunn, the driver's son, was named as a co-conspirator in the canned corn heist. He simultaneously faced charges related to the Wrigley's gum heist, which had led authorities to track his father's truck to begin with, plus additional charges for nabbing eight other trucks between 2006 and 2012, with hauls that included microwaves, Freon, beauty products, and computers.

The FBI noted hundreds of thousands of dollars moving in and out of Roderick Nunn's and his girlfriend's bank accounts during the same period, which agents figured to be the couple's cut of the proceeds. Based on the estimated 10 percent a driver would receive, the FBI extrapolated that the total value of Nunn's trailer thefts was likely in the realm of \$8 million. Roderick Nunn was sentenced to 6½ years in prison for the Wrigley's heist. He has since been paroled.

Adapted from an article originally published in Narratively.com. Used with permission.

Crossword No. 562: You Can Watch It Backward by Matt Gaffney



- ACROSS**
- 1 Pie nut
 - 6 Cyclists shift them
 - 11 Do better than
 - 14 Give a stump speech
 - 15 Outstanding Drama Series winner of 1987, 1989, 1990, and 1991
 - 16 ___ de cologne
 - 17 *Tenet* is a thrice-delayed 2020 Christopher Nolan movie whose protagonist seeks to avert this conflict
 - 19 Rival of FedEx
 - 20 1972's *The ___ Lewis Cookbook*
 - 21 Twitch revenue sources
 - 22 Hit the gas pedal
 - 24 Part of a space mission
 - 26 Davis who started the Bentonville Film Festival
 - 27 Type of foot bone
 - 29 Coordinate
 - 32 State currently considering rules for brothels to re-open
 - 35 Rachael who's hosting free summer cooking classes for kids on Zoom
 - 37 Home to the Himalayas
 - 38 Yes, to some Swiss
 - 39 Put in one's two cents, maybe
 - 42 Boathouse decoration
 - 43 Big dispensers
 - 45 Archaic "So true!"
 - 46 Lacks the ability to
 - 48 "Obviously!"
 - 50 Spot
 - 52 Taken as a whole
 - 54 Or more
 - 58 City southeast of Sacramento
 - 60 Time period
 - 61 Stalemate in chess, e.g.
 - 62 Some phones run on it
 - 63 *Anna* is a quirky 1987 drama for which Sally Kirkland won one of these
 - 66 Copy mindlessly
 - 67 Employment
 - 68 *The Power of Positive Thinking* author Norman Vincent ___
 - 69 ___ Aviv
 - 70 Investor Schiff
 - 71 Tossed in
 - DOWN**
 - 1 Button on a TV
 - 2 Weaken
 - 3 Chili con ___
 - 4 Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms' city
 - 5 Connecticut governor Lamont
 - 6 Knight from 4-Down
 - 7 Sound detectors
 - 8 Actress Landry or Larter
 - 9 Bring up, as an issue
 - 10 Runs, as a credit card
 - 11 *Dad* is a 1989 comedy with Jack Lemmon as the title character, and this sitcom star as his son
 - 12 The Banzai Pipeline's island
 - 13 Option in orange juice
 - 18 Permission to search
 - 23 "OnlyTime" singer
 - 25 "I did it!"
 - 26 Hefty rival
 - 28 "You ___ busted!"
 - 30 "Toodle-oo!"
 - 31 Early front-runner for the 1988 Democratic nomination
 - 32 Mad Libs request
 - 33 It's worth about 23 nickels
 - 34 XXX is a 2002 action hit in which this star plays a Hollywood stuntman trying to thwart Russian terrorists
 - 36 Cancún's peninsula
 - 40 Work the soil
 - 41 Dark cloud
 - 44 Phoenix squad
 - 47 Picked on
 - 49 End a conversation, maybe
 - 51 Life's work
 - 53 Far from form-fitting
 - 55 "There's ___ in Oklahoma..." (Steve Earle lyric)
 - 56 Fish mocked by 11-Down in a *Curb Your Enthusiasm* episode
 - 57 Professor's material?
 - 58 Automaker based in Turin
 - 59 Ladder material, sometimes
 - 60 Slight lead
 - 64 Paper with lots of showbiz scoops
 - 65 A number of students?

The Week Contest

This week's question: A psychiatrist in Ottawa was caught repeatedly falling asleep during therapy sessions with patients. If the dozing doctor were to write a book on a new kind of therapy in which you tell your problems to someone who is fast asleep, what could it be titled?

Last week's contest: A British pub has come up with a novel way of enforcing social distancing: an electric fence between bartenders and patrons. The fence isn't usually live, said the owner of the Star Inn, but "it can be turned on." If you were to rename this pub to reflect its electrifying distancing technology, what would you call it?

THE WINNER: The Plugged Inn
Skip Flanagan, Roseville, Calif.

SECOND PLACE: The Crown Joule
Matt Mistele and Janet Coleman-Belin, Palo Alto, Calif.

THIRD PLACE: The Watt-ering Hole
Jason Kuller, Bethesda, Md.

For runners-up and complete contest rules, please go to theweek.com/contest.

How to enter: Submissions should be emailed to contest@theweek.com. Please include your name, address, and daytime telephone number for verification; this week, type "Sleep therapy" in the subject line. Entries are due by noon, Eastern Time, Tuesday, Aug. 4. Winners will appear on the Puzzle Page next issue and at theweek.com/puzzles on Friday, Aug. 7. In the case of identical or similar entries, the first one received gets credit.

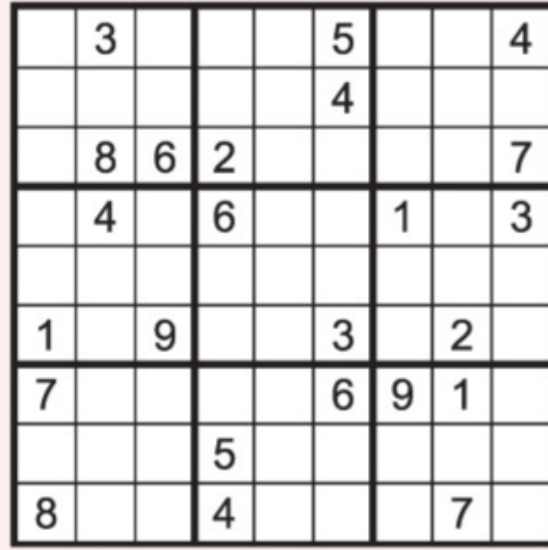


◀ The winner gets a one-year subscription to *The Week*.

Sudoku

Fill in all the boxes so that each row, column, and outlined square includes all the numbers from 1 through 9.

Difficulty: hard



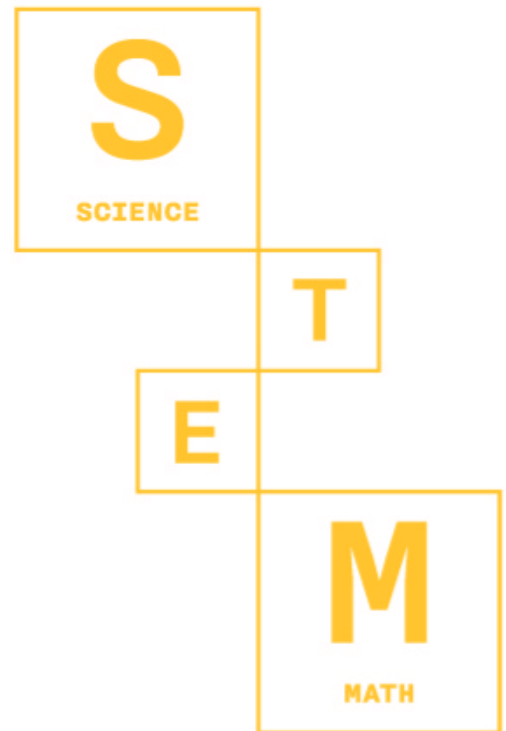
Find the solutions to all *The Week's* puzzles online: www.theweek.com/puzzle.

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EVER WONDER IF THERE'S LIFE ON OTHER PLANETS?

LUCIANNE WALKOWICZ
ASTRONOMER, THE ADLER PLANETARIUM

GIRLS IN STEM BECOME WOMEN WHO CHANGE THE WORLD.
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